

The
CHURCH
SCHOOL
in
ACTION

ARTHUR
KENDALL
GETMAN



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The Church School in Action

ARTHUR KENDALL GETMAN
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To
KENDALL GOODIER GETMAN
MY FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD SON
FROM WHOM I HAVE LEARNED MUCH
REGARDING THE PROBLEMS
OF YOUTH

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INTRODUCTION

THE average individual who is trying to make a contribution to religious education through work in the church school or some other agency finds himself just now in a bit of a fog. Some of the well-intentioned efforts to clear the atmosphere have only succeeded in making more mist. This is only natural, for religious education is groping toward the formulation of principles and development of technique.

In this confusion it is heartening to find someone whose thought is not only intellectually sound but thoroughly practical and who speaks not only out of a wealth of technical knowledge of educational procedure but also out of a long experience in the actual work of Christian education as it is represented in the teaching and administration of the church school.

Mr. Getman is chief of the Agricultural Education Bureau of the University of the State of New York. He knows the science of pedagogy. He also knows how to orga-

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nize and direct religious teaching. This he has successfully done for over fifteen years as a church-school superintendent and as chairman of the Religious Instruction Committee of the Board of Education of his Conference. He writes with facility and skill, expressing simply and directly the outcome of first-hand experience. What he says will be understood by the officers and teachers in the church school.

His stimulating suggestions on how we can help youth solve their problems; his description of the processes by which we learn; his study of Jesus, the Master Teacher; his advice upon ways of teaching the Bible and of organizing for work are all vital, practical, and very readable. We are happy to commend the volume to officers and teachers who are anxious to inform themselves and increase their own usefulness. All who are interested in the literature of religious education will find here a worthwhile contribution.

LUCIUS H. BUGBEE.

HOW IT CAME TO BE WRITTEN

"You don't love God, do you? Surely you want your soul saved?" murmured a kindly maiden lady into the ear of a twelve-year-old lad as he sat bolt upright in the pew. A revival was in progress. Not understanding what it was all about, he went forward with the rest. It was all very puzzling. He had been told that he was not a Christian until he had done something; exactly what, he could not make out. Next day he went out in the woods by himself to think it over. As he lay on his back under the big pines his bewilderment increased, for he thought he had always loved God. Surely he had done his best to live as the stories said Jesus had lived. Telling his troubles to his mother, he learned that he still loved God and that he should go on trying to live like Jesus. A kindly pastor too helped him to clear up some of his problems when he joined the church.

Then came college days. He was preparing for a scientific career. What a jolt was in store for him! The geology conflicted with Genesis. His biology and the virgin

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birth were out of harmony. The story of Daniel's three young friends in the overheated furnace was all awry with the chemistry. The astronomy checked somewhat with the Bible accounts, for the stars did "declare the glory of God," though he found difficulty in determining how a star millions of miles away could point out an inn on the eastern hemisphere. In the midst of his doubts his mother died and an only brother of whom he was very fond was drowned. In addition, a physical handicap was becoming more acute. All this, coupled with self-support, made the silver lining seem afar off. Then the Christian teachings of his mother and the kindly pastor saved the day.

He chose the field of teaching in the applied science for which he had prepared. Later he was State administrator for that branch of teaching. Meanwhile he became interested in church-school work. For nearly fifteen years he was superintendent and was spared none of the trials usually accompanying that office. Subsequently he became a member of the executive committee of a Board of Religious Education and actively engaged in two State-wide Christian educa-

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tion organizations. He searched diligently for a little volume that would place before officers and teachers suggestions regarding the problems of youth in Christian living. Under the urge to suggest his own experience as a guide to teachers, and with the encouragement of his colleagues, he agreed to prepare a small volume. This little book is the result.

Since the turn of the century, when many, like the writer, passed through the perplexities of finding true religion, profound changes have taken place. The changing world baffles even the most alert students. Some, viewing the new array of scientific applications, point to them as indicating the main direction of our progress. Others, less optimistic, decry the advance of lawlessness, the waywardness of youth, the waning interest in the finer things of life, and lament such trends of our time. Desiring a way out of the muddle, many are ready with suggestions. Theories of government, social reform, economic adjustments, and new emphasis on education and religion are in the foreground. We seem agreed that the surest path to continued progress is by the route of

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youth, equipped to meet the new demands imposed by a rapidly changing civilization.

From the beginning we have sought to discover the secrets and to make clear the meanings of religion. Countless paths have been tramped in the search. In our time they lead into devious byways. Religious thought is also undergoing a change. Sectarian strife and theological disagreement are evident. Youth especially is perplexed over the dilemma, made even more tangle-some by the new knowledge of science, nature, and man himself. Some feel that the church in its teaching has not kept pace with our advancing experience in material things. Accordingly, there emerges on the horizon a problem of Christian education quite startling both in its demands and its difficulties. As we look to education to guide youth in meeting the needs of life, so we are coming to look to Christianity to guide youth in centering that life in high spiritual values. Because true religion springs from an inner human need it should be made a part of every one's life experience. No education is complete without active experience in the deeper meanings of life.

HOW IT CAME TO BE WRITTEN

It has been the writer's desire to separate any consideration of the problems of Christian education from the fickle arguments about religion. Rather, he has sought to express a simple philosophy of Christian teaching based on his own experience and study, to point out some of our major problems, with some possible solutions, and to direct attention to possible future trends. It is hoped that the volume will be of assistance to pastors, officers, and teachers in the church school, and to lay people who have an interest in Christian education. No claim is laid to theological insight, or to historical knowledge of religion. In simple, non-technical language, amplified by illustrations from personal experience, an effort has been made to develop the idea of wholesome Christian living as a major basis of Christian education. The author has been convinced that boys and girls have *real* problems in the field of Christianity to be solved. We need to solve pupils' life problems. One way is to create in them a *want* to be children of God. Spiritual values are caught, then taught. Jesus, the Master-Teacher, points the way. The Bible, as our source Book of spiritual

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power, should be used to help solve life problems, and should be studied for its own sake. Departmental grading of pupils and centralization of schools in rural areas seem imperative. Our forward look is in the direction of scientific study of the problem in the hope of unifying our newly discovered powers and our yet dimly understood spiritual resources.

For their encouragement and suggestions the author is indebted to his colleagues, Dr. Riley M. Little, New York State Department of Education, Dr. W. G. Landes, general secretary of the New York State Council of Religious Education, and Dr. Mark Kelley, his pastor. Grateful acknowledgment is also made of the courtesy of publishers who have granted permission to make quotations from publications.

ARTHUR K. GETMAN.

CHAPTER I

HELPING YOUTH SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS

A LITTLE group of teen-aged boys sat with their leader about the evening camp fire on the shore of one of the smaller lakes in the Adirondacks. For nearly an hour they had been discussing the elements of geology, but conversation had waned.

As the moon rose above the tops of the pines on the opposite shore, one of the lads broke the silence. "What keeps the moon up there in the sky?" he queried.

"While you're asking that," interposed a companion, "where did the moon come from, anyway?"

Then in rapid succession came other questions from these inquisitive minds regarding the deeper mysteries of nature.

"What is gravity?"

"Where does electricity come from?"

"When did time begin?"

"How far do you suppose space extends?"

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"How did life get onto the earth?"

"How could God create the universe?"

In supervising the instruction in a large church school the writer observed the keen interest of the pupils in questions concerning the deeper values of life. These questions came incidental to the regular class teaching. Convinced that active pupil interest could be aroused in the consideration of such life problems, the young people were encouraged to bring their problems to the class meetings. Following is a partial list of the problems or statements presented, quoted or expressed in substance.

"How do we know that there is a God?"

"How can I love God when I have never seen him or have no knowledge of him?"

"How can I love my neighbor, when he is a selfish, hard-boiled old codger?"

"What is the difference between conscience and the Holy Spirit?"

"I can't see how God could create the world and the laws which control it, and then send his Son to break these laws, such as the law of gravity?"

"Sometimes, when I have tried hard to do something, and have failed, I seem to feel

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that God understands that I have done my best, and that he will help me to do better next time."

"When I pray, how do I know but that I am merely suggesting the answer to myself, and that God has no part in it?"

"How could the three young friends of Daniel be thrown into the hot furnace and not even be singed? It sounds to me like a fairy story."

"It seems to me that some of the characters in the Old Testament were a long way from keeping the Ten Commandments."

"When I am alone in the woods, I seem to understand how it is that God loves me, and that he is anxious for me to do right."

"Where did my grandfather go when he died?"

"I am beginning to like our worship service. The quiet and what we do help me to think of God."

"How did God speak to all those people back there in the Bible time? Doesn't he speak to people nowadays the way he did then?"

"I don't like the way David sent Uriah

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up there in the front line to be killed so that he could have his wife, Bathsheba. That was a dirty trick."

"Why do the songs tell about heaven up in the sky when Jesus said that heaven is within you."

"Doesn't God answer our prayers when we do our best to answer them ourselves?"

"Can we love God when we are unkind to our playmates?"

"How did God talk to those men who wrote the Bible?"

"Will religion help me to get along in the world?"

"How could Jesus have been born on December 25th, when the flocks were not pastured by night at that season of the year in that country?"

Such questions and statements may be secured from almost any group of thoughtful young people. To those interested in studying the problems of Christian education such expressions have two major implications: (1) Our church-school pupils are seeking light on the penetrating issues of life, and (2) the officers and teachers in the church school face both a responsibility and a

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challenge in meeting present-day demands in Christian teaching.

THE POINT OF VIEW OF YOUTH

Through the ages adults have consistently held that youth is riding for a fall. It is the pet hobby of a present generation to believe that when they were young things were not done or said as they are by the youth of to-day. Styles of dress, social customs, and taboos change from generation to generation. But such outward expressions are no indication of the thoughts and feelings of youth. From every evidence at our disposal, the conclusion is warranted that never before in modern times have young people been so concerned with the mysteries and the deeper problems of life. Their burning denunciation of the efforts of the present generation to deal with political, social and economic problems can but startle the thoughtful citizen. Then, too, they are searching for light in Christianity. They ask for bread and too frequently receive a stone.

Examine the experiences of youth—their education, their knowledge of the world, and

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the environment in which they live. Twenty years ago one pupil in sixteen in the United States was in high school. To-day one pupil in five is in high school. In one State the number of high-school pupils increased more than 600 percent in twenty-five years. To increased numbers of pupils more accurate knowledge of the world has been taught. In the field of science especially the content of instruction has been improved to keep pace with our rapidly increasing knowledge of nature and her laws. Pupils are taught to observe accurately, to reason from cause to effect and to think scientifically regarding the facts and phenomena of the laboratory. They learn to apply their knowledge of science to the everyday problems in the home, in the school, and at their work. The knowledge of the average high-school junior concerning electronics, television, aeronautics, photosynthesis, and evolution both startles and befuddles his parents.

Observing a group of high-school pupils seated in the gallery of the United States senate, listening to the debate on an economic question, the writer took a seat at their rear. Their attention was focused on

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the points under discussion. Some of the threadbare principles of economics which were used to facilitate certain points seemed not to appeal to two of the older boys, and as they closed the door which leads from the gallery one was heard to remark to the other: "If you ask me, that last argument was the bunk. I don't think he had all the facts." So, in the field of the social sciences our young people have a keen grasp of the major problems of the day. Their study of history, economics, economic geography, and civics equips them to analyze such problems with an accuracy and understanding far greater than most of their parents at their ages.

Note further the advantages of our modern environment. The radio, motion pictures, the automobile, the daily newspaper, books and magazines, all contribute to an enriched experience and knowledge of the affairs of the world. They witness almost daily the applications of science in conveniences and comforts. A man-made world impresses them, as they are told that the age of science has but just begun.

Six days each week the workaday world

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goes merrily on. With more accurate knowledge of nature and with broader experience in a jostling scientific age than has ever been possessed by youth in the past, our children come to the church school on the seventh day. As science had its early beginnings in wonder, so these young people have been taught to ask questions. They have been told that true thinking begins with a "felt difficulty." When there is a problem to be solved the man of science prepares for action. Quite properly, then, in the study of religion our pupils experience "felt difficulties." They have real problems to be solved. Clearly it is the responsibility of the church school to guide its pupils in understanding Christianity and to aid them in solving their life problems.

Within the decade character education has received a powerful impetus in elementary, junior, and senior high schools. Officials have recognized the fact that, at graduation, boys and girls find themselves at the threshold of adult life in an environment that has been all but revolutionized since the turn of the century. Usually they consider character as being determined largely by the re-

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lationships of a pupil to his fellows. Such qualities as loyalty, trustworthiness, courtesy, kindness, integrity, obedience, and reliability are being set as teaching objectives both within and without the school. The activities of the church school may augment effectively such a character-training program. Of greater importance, however, is the opportunity which character education in public schools affords the church school in vitalizing ideals with the spiritual urge to love God and to serve man.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE CHURCH

Will the church school be able to meet these new demands? We must admit at the outset that the church is failing in its ability to hold pupils in regular attendance and in increasing numbers. At a time when our public-school enrollments are reaching unprecedented levels the church schools are experiencing marked decreases in attendance. The disturbing factor in these declines is the larger proportionate losses between the ages of twelve and eighteen years. This is the age when our boys and girls could profit most by the right type of Christian

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teaching. Perhaps one element which contributes to a decreasing enrollment during these ages is the fact that they are not having their problems of life adequately solved.

Many of the present practices of the church school are open to serious question. Much of our vague generalizing about God and Jesus is harmful or meaningless. Locating God "above in the sky," hearing God's voice in "a dream," considering God as "all powerful" and that he could "make the sun reverse its course if he wanted to," and teaching that "He is looking down from above," or that "He holds us in the palm of his hand," create erroneous impressions which oftentimes remain through life. Likewise many of our expressions and references to Jesus are meaningless to pupils. Such phrases as, "washed in his blood," "following the Lamb," or "coming down from above," mean little or nothing to children, yet they constitute a large part of many worship services and teaching activities. Too frequently such generalizations in connection with the daily problems of children and youth and the pressing personal, moral, civic and social problems of our day are

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substitutes for prayer and instruction. Generalizing on the vital problems of pupils may become actually harmful, since wrong impressions are created as to the ability of the church school to help solve life questions. Furthermore, if the ready-made and traditional answers of the church are inconsistent with the pupil's life experience—and they frequently are—annoyance and disrespect follow. It is believed that all normal pupils have an intense desire to know more of the deeper meanings of life. Each year of growth brings new experiences and new problems. As yet we have but played with the fringe of the garment in providing Christian experience for them.

A situation which proves most troublesome to the church-school teacher occurs in the teaching materials in bulletins and lesson content. It is with hesitation that this factor of weakness is mentioned. Caution and careful studies in the gradation of Christian experience suited to pupil needs will in time correct present difficulties in published materials. Erroneous ideas of God, misconceptions of the stories in the Old Testament, and utterly ridiculous suggestions regarding

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the phenomena of nature, eventually will be corrected.

A handicap somewhat less acute is inadequate suggestion and guidance for the worship period. One ventures the thought that this fact has brought less harm than inferior teaching materials because the worship session so frequently has been treated lightly by officers and teachers. Under right conditions of housing, departmental grading, program planning, controlled environment, and insistence on reverence, the worship period possesses great possibilities for Christian teaching.¹

The thesis of this little volume is that the church can and will be able to meet the Christian educational needs of children and young people, *provided* the officials of the church and the church school devote the same type of study and effort to the problems of Christian education as is given to such activities as scientific research, public-school education, business management and manufacturing. We must approach such

¹The reader is referred to a special study made by Dr. A. H. MacLean, "The Idea of God in Protestant Religious Education," Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University.

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problems with the same fact-finding accuracy as has characterized our economic and industrial life. To be sure, church-school programs suffer acutely from traditional handicaps and doctrinal difficulties. Consider how modern science struggled against early prejudices and accusations of witchcraft. Think of the denunciation of scientific inventions as late as 1828. It is reported that on being asked for permission to hold a public meeting in the school house, to consider the development of railroads, the trustees of a local school in Ohio replied: "You are welcome to use the school room to debate all proper questions; but such things as railroads are impossibilities and rank infidelities. There is nothing in the word of God about them. If God had designed that his intelligent creatures should travel at the frightful speed of fifteen miles an hour by steam, he would have foretold it through his Holy Prophet. It is a device of Satan to lead immortal souls down to Hell."

A kindly critic suggests that we have made progress in Christian education. We are not unmindful of the sacrificial services of countless thousands of church-school workers who

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spend and are spent in the cause of Christian teaching. Much of their effort, however, especially in rural and small village areas, has been severely handicapped by inadequate facilities, equipment and libraries, poor organization, absence of professional leadership and little or no attention to teacher training. We must think far more of the natures, interests and activities of children, and much less of creeds, dogmas, rituals and denominational differences. We must have a "child-centered" church school. When we cease to toy with the idea of the need for Christian education in general, and put our minds at work improving our church-school organization, providing adequate housing facilities, and securing sufficient funds to purchase needed equipment and to finance professional leadership, we may expect the church school to help youth solve its problems.

THE LONG, LONG THOUGHTS OF YOUTH

As we progress in our study of the problems of Christian education, it is imperative that our attention be focused on spiritual growth and power. In a day when

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material prosperity is in the saddle the need for and the difficulties of acquiring moral and spiritual inspiration are doubly acute. Youth brings to life a sensitive spiritual nature untarnished by the influences of the work-a-day world, which tend to dim the tiny spark. Many of us can recall vividly the early stirring of the Spirit within us. We were fortunate, indeed, to have had a faithful mother or a kindly teacher to guide us at that point. In later years have we not recalled the gleam of spiritual understanding and wished that it might return with equal clearness as the world has come to seem to us sometimes like a self-running and self-regulated device with God a long way off?

One of the finest lessons in Christian teaching to be found anywhere in literature is the guidance of the boy Samuel by Eli, the Hebrew prophet. Recall the story of the lad seated alone in his tent, and his awakening spiritual insight. His intimate association with Eli seems to have strengthened his sensitiveness of nature and his readiness to feel the presence of God. His quick response, "Here am I," further prepared him for the instruction of the aged

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prophet whose own sons had failed so miserably. Perhaps Eli's experience with them had equipped him to deal so wisely with the boy Samuel.

"Go lie down once more, and if the voice speaks to you again, say, 'Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth,' " declared the prophet when the lad came seeking light. In the quiet of his tent Samuel listened to the voice from within. Obedient to the newly discovered Spirit of the living God, he entered upon a life of majestic leadership and spiritual power among his people. Countless sermons in the field of Christian education have been preached from this simple story of a servant of God, who understood the beginning of spiritual inquiry in a boy's nature. In our time as in the time of Eli we should bend every energy to stimulate and nurture the abiding and eternal spiritual values in the pupils entrusted to our charge.

Youth perceives spiritual reactions quickly and surely. This is a marvelous asset for the trained and consecrated parent or teacher. Longfellow seems very near the truth of child nature when in his beautiful verses, "My Lost Youth," he speaks of "the

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long, long thoughts of youth." He tells of a long walk over familiar scenes during a visit to Portland in 1846. "I lay down," he says, "in one of the embrasures and listened to the lashing, lulling sound of the sea just at my feet. It was a beautiful afternoon and the harbor was full of white sails, coming and departing. Meditated a poem on the Old Fort." He did not write the poem until March 29, 1855. In Cambridge he wrote in his diary: "A day of pain; cowering over the fire. At night, as I lay in bed, a poem comes into my mind—a memory of Portland, my native town, the city by the sea. March 30, wrote the poem; and am rather pleased with it and with the bringing in of the two lines of the old Lapland Song,

"A boy's will is the wind's will
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts."

The first and seventh stanzas of the poem are here quoted:

"Often I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
And my youth comes back to me.

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And a verse of Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts.

"I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the schoolboy's brain;
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.
And the voice of that fitful song
Sings on, and is never still:
A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts."

CHAPTER II

OUR NATURE AND HOW WE LEARN

IN a Washington museum two boys gazed steadfastly at the Spirit of St. Louis, suspended from the ceiling in the main corridor. They were thrilled at the sight of the plane which the hero of the air had piloted across the Atlantic a few months before. "Can you imagine starting across the ocean in that little plane?" said one. "Just think of the nerve it took to make the flight alone; think of the chances he took," rejoined the other. Plainly, their emotions were stirred to the depths as they visualized the historic flight.

Some weeks later a group of nearly seven hundred high-school boys was asked this question, "If you could be someone other than yourself, whom would you choose to be?" When the answers were counted, fifty-three per cent of the papers bore one name—Lindbergh. These boys were at an age when heroes play an important part in

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their lives. In these modern days of spectacular achievement many choices were open to them, but military genius, captains of industry, athletic stars, wizards of science, and the like were passed by in favor of the young aviator, who in addition to his achievement, knew how to conduct himself before an admiring world.

On that eventful night in May, 1927, when Lindbergh was far out over the Atlantic, a prize fight was in progress in New York. The eighty thousand persons assembled were, as Terhune suggests, "rough-necks." Presently the announcer stepped into the ring and waved the crowd to silence, saying, in substance: "I don't know what your religion is, and I don't care, but Slim Lindbergh is out over the Atlantic. We're all hoping for his success. We'd like to help him. The only way I know to do that is to stand up and give a minute to silent prayer." Without hesitation the crowd surged to its feet, and for one brief moment sent a petition to Almighty God to protect the whole-souled boy.

Coli and Nungesser, the gallant French fliers, had lost their lives somewhere in the

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Atlantic. From many lands came messages to the bereaved mother of Nungesser. On the morning after his arrival at LeBourget, Lindbergh's first act was to pay his respects to the saddened mother of his colleague flier. Both she and the waiting world were deeply moved by the courtesy.

The two lads in the museum, Madame Nungesser, the group of high-school boys, and the crowd in the arena possessed one common element. They were *changed* by Lindbergh's flight. Their emotions were stirred, their ideals were quickened, and their respect for one fellow man was heightened. It is not strange that Lindbergh captured the admiration of our American youth. His steadfastness of purpose, his faith in himself, his dauntless courage, fine poise, and good judgment suggested these traits as desirable qualities to thousands of boys.

OUR NATURES ARE COMPLEX

These reactions to Lindbergh's heroism and nobility indicate man's nature, which is very complex. Any attempt to describe his nature by rules or formulas must fail, because we are not built that way. Each

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personality is constantly *changing*. We are a moving and changing bundle of energy. It is not our nature to "stay put." From infancy to the closing of our eyes in final sleep, each day we are different.

Education is concerned chiefly in bringing about desirable *changes* in pupils and in preventing undesirable ones.¹ In the science of education we have sought to learn in recent years just what changes should be made in human nature. In the art and practice of teaching we have sought to learn how to make such changes. When the infant arrives, he brings with him inherited and unlearned tendencies. This native equipment in intelligence, skills, and interests differs only in slight degree from the native equipment of infants born before the dawn of history. Nothing of the accumulated intelligence, ideals, culture, or habits of parents is transmitted to the infant. It is the function of education so to change individual pupils that they may acquire the desirable intelligence, ideals, skills, attitudes, habits, and the like.

¹The educational psychology here outlined is after the lectures and writings of Dr. E. L. Thorndike, professor of education, Teachers College, Columbia University.

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Desirable changes are brought about most effectively when our desirable *wants* are gratified and when our undesirable wants are repressed. According to psychology all human activity has its beginning in and is sustained by some desire or want. A basic aim of all education is to secure the fullest gratification of these wants. The science of education teaches that human wants occupy the central place in education because they are the essential elements which prompt our activity. When we change an individual so that his wants are changed we have taken the most fundamental of all steps in teaching. When a want has been rightly changed many changes in thinking, feeling, and action follow. This fact is as fundamental in Christian education as in any other form of teaching.

Dewey² has consistently held that education is living happily and usefully here and now, rather than in preparing for living by and by. He places the emphasis on happy and useful living rather than upon *mere* living. To assist children and youth so to

² Dewey, John, *Democracy and Education*. The Macmillan Company.

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live we must concern ourselves in guiding them in acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes, moral ideals and right habits in order that they may "grow up" in the right way. Only as we concern ourselves with their normal growth in these respects may we be assured that their wants will be satisfied. Each year's living must be intrinsically worth while. Many tests in the science of education and in the art of teaching have demonstrated the justification and the soundness of the thesis of this paragraph.

Like human nature, our modern ways of living are very complex. In a democratic society, the individual must adjust his wants to the wants of others. The pioneer needed to give but little thought to problems of public sanitation, checking accounts, parking regulations, or taxation. He needed chiefly to adjust himself to meet his own wants and those of his family. In our complex society it is quite different. The individual must make many adjustments in his own wants and desires in order to live happily and usefully. Studies in the sciences of medicine, government, psychology, economics, sociology, and ethics have shown certain specific

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needs for adjustment in satisfying our wants. Thorndike and Gates list the following needs of education:³

I. Needed Adjustments to Situations in Modern Life:

1. Adjustments to the physical world.
2. Adjustments to economic situations.
3. Adjustments to family situations.
4. Adjustments to social situations.
5. Adjustments to civic situations.

II. Needed Types of Personal Equipment:

1. Physical health.
2. Mental health and balance.
3. Recreational resources.
4. Ethical and religious resources.
5. Intellectual resources.

THE PLACE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The church school supplements the work of the public and private schools. If the church fails adequately to meet the wants of pupils in the field of Christian living or fails to adjust them to the realm of spiritual resources, then we are quite sure that such wants and such adjustments will not be met.

Christianity deals with the deepest mean-

³Thorndike, E. L., and Gates, A. I., *Elementary Principles of Education*, p. 34. The Macmillan Company.

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ings of life. It carries us beyond the superficial wants of the workaday world. When rightly taught, it associates our aims and activities with the will and profound purposes of God. Since the beginnings of recorded history, man has sought explanations for his own feelings and the natural phenomena of the universe.

Through philosophy man has built up his notions of the nature of the universe as a whole. He has sought to explain his own thoughts, feelings, and actions. The early Greeks framed an elaborate structure of explanations of man's character and his relations with his fellow men. The ideas of Plato which have come down to us in modern times explain much of our human relations. With the passage of time other great thinkers have added their suggestions to our stock of explanations, some of the most valuable contributions having been made in our own generation.

In the field of ethics man has sought to set up rules or codes for guiding us in our conduct. The aim of ethics is morality. Ethical codes of morality seem to have been built in accordance with certain established

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philosophies of life. The codes of the early Stoics, for example, were most exacting in moral conduct. These strict rules seemed to have been based upon certain ideas of rigid self-control and the bearing of pain unflinchingly. Now we commonly think of morality as obedience to certain laws. The dictionary defines morality as the system and practice of duty required by the moral law, consisting chiefly of outward acts; thus one may be moral without spiritual rectitude of heart. Morality, it is declared further, is (also) included in all true religion, which involves both outward act and spiritual service. Thorndike suggests that ethics means cultivation of the mind and that religion embraces both understanding and acceptance by the heart.

Christianity thus deals with the powerful spiritual forces of life. It is a way of living. Jesus, its Founder, by his teaching and his example, established certain truths regarding the Christian manner of life. In simple and direct language he taught the enduring and penetrating values of life. "Love God" and "love thy neighbor," he declared. For nineteen centuries those who have accepted

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Christianity have been seeking the larger life through the application of the truths which he taught. Through the study and practice of Christianity we grow spiritually—our spiritual wants become satisfied. We subordinate our own wants to what God wants. Through Christianity our lives are *changed*. A new spiritual insight and power is at our control. Our thoughts, our feelings, and our actions are adjusted to meet higher purposes. Because it is the function of the church school to bring about such a change in pupils, its officers and teachers must understand what changes are desirable, the original natures of children which need to be changed, and the methods of teaching to accomplish such ends.

LEARNING IS REACTING

Gazing upon the Spirit of St. Louis, the boys were thrilled by the valor of its navigator. The psychologist says that they *reacted* to the situation of the aeroplane and its flight. As a result they might do a variety of things. Their interest in making toy aeroplanes might be aroused. They might consider aviation as a career. They

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might become interested in the design of the small craft. Or, what seems most likely from their comments, their emotional nature would be stirred. It is probable that the experience quickened their emotional response to the ideals and conduct of Lindbergh. In any event, because of the experience they did something different. They *re-acted*.

From earliest infancy we learn by reacting to certain things, conditions, people, pains, voices and the like. As suggested earlier, this repetition of reactions keeps us in a constant state of being changed. By the time a child enters school he has acquired millions of reactions to life situations and activities. Reduced to simplest terms, teaching is concerned with providing conditions and situations so that the pupil may acquire the right kind of reactions and avoid the wrong kind.

Nature is constantly at work to help us, if we understand and use her laws. The scientists have discovered certain facts about our learning. They teach us that man never does anything for nothing. We act when we wish to satisfy a want. We learn most readily those reactions which result in a gratify-

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ing effect. Conversely, we tend not to learn those reactions which are accompanied or followed by annoyance. Our learning to think, to feel, or to act is greatly improved through *practice*. Furthermore, we learn better when our practice *succeeds*. In learning to swim, for example, we acquire the motions that succeed, and do not learn the motions which *fail* to give us desirable results.

Another basic law of learning is this: "When an individual is ready to act in a certain way, for him to act in that way is satisfying and for him not to act is annoying. Conversely, when an individual is not ready to act in a certain way, for him to act in that way is annoying."⁴ Space will not permit an extensive discussion of these fundamental laws of learning. They are stated here in brief to direct our attention to them, since in later sections of our study we shall have occasion to refer to them in their application to certain organization and teaching practices in Christian education.

⁴Thorndike, E. L., and Gates, A. I., *Elementary Principles of Education*, The Macmillan Company. The reader is referred to pp 84-105 for a complete statement of these laws and their application in education.

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MORAL AND EMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The biologist teaches that no two living things are exactly alike. Most of all, no two persons are alike. Each one of us possesses certain traits or characteristics which distinguish us from other persons. Such traits as accuracy, neatness, truthfulness, friendliness, impetuosity, and self-control are familiar examples. Each personality consists of the integrated total of all the traits. It will be clear that our personalities are very intricate and complex and that they are constantly changing. When we speak of a person as having "sterling" character, we commonly mean that his personality is made up of many desirable traits.

The separate traits which make up our personality result from our *reactions* to hundreds of life situations. A large proportion of our traits results from our contacts with people. As we deal with brothers, sisters, playmates, parents, teachers, storekeepers, policemen, and others, we react in certain desirable or undesirable ways. The sum total of such reactions constitutes the traits which enable us to get along well with others.

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Unnumbered thousands of reactions of thought, conduct, feelings, and appreciations combine to make all of us what we are to-day.

We learn to live the right type of life by living in right ways each day. The nearer the life in the church school and its related activities is to normal life needs, the more certain we may be that reactions gained there will be used in real life. As already suggested, the special opportunities for training offered by the church school are in the field of spiritual values. These values seem to be intimately associated with the sense of appreciation, the æsthetic feelings, and the tender emotions. Because of the influence of such feelings when aroused in controlling our conduct and our thoughts they may well be linked with a study of moral conduct. "Do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God," the great dictum of Micah, suggests the traits of justice, love, and humility to be achieved by those who would lead the good life. When conduct is controlled by these traits, the appreciations and feelings in a higher realm are encouraged. Jesus placed major emphasis on the

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attribute of love. "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, . . . And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," he declared. Love is the tenderest of the emotions. When love controls, our thoughts and our conduct will rise above the urge of mere sordid and selfish wants.

A KEY PROBLEM

The great religions of the world seem to agree on the theme of the Golden Rule. In the books of each we find a specific direction regarding conduct toward others:

"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."—Christian.

"Let none of you treat your brother in a way he himself would dislike to be treated."—Mohammedan.

"The true rule is to guard and do by the things of others as you do by your own."—Hindu.

"One should seek for others the happiness one desires for oneself."—Buddhist.

"Do as you would be done by."—Zoroastrian.

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“What you do not wish done to yourself, do not to others.”—Confucian.

“Whatsoever you do not wish your neighbor to do to you, do not unto him.”—Hebrew.⁵

It will be noted that such directions for conduct are in direct opposition to our strong and powerful native tendencies to dominate others, to rise above our rivals and to hoard or steal in order to protect oneself. This fact makes teaching in the field of æsthetic feelings and moral conduct exceedingly difficult. In teaching the usual knowledges and skills in the day schools there are fewer original cravings to be overcome. In these fields learning is generally assisted by the laws of learning. Readiness to acquire new facts and skills may be secured without great difficulty. In teaching a code of morals, such, for example, as the Ten Commandments, the learner must overcome, first, certain original cravings such as hunger, sex, desire to collect goods for oneself, scorn, selfishness, pugnacity, and the like. In modern times almost all of the sin and woe in the civilized world is clustered about our

⁵ Martin, Alfred W., *World Unity Magazine*.

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failure to control the original tendencies of sex, greed, and pugnacity.

We learn to live by living. In the writer's boyhood it was customary to hang mottoes on the walls of our homes. "Dare to do right," "Be trustworthy," "Honesty is the best policy," and "Love God," are familiar examples of such mottoes. But merely framing them and hanging them on the wall did little good in helping us to do what they suggested, unless each day we did right things, acted trustworthily, conducted honest dealings, and loved God. Being told what it is well for us to do is not enough. We must actually *practice* those traits that we desire to possess. We learn only as we practice, and we learn best when our practice *succeeds*. The very nerve of the problem, then, in teaching spiritual and moral values, is that we must provide ways and means for pupils to *practice with satisfaction and success* those activities which inhere in a spiritual and moral personality. Educators agree that this presents an acute challenge to the church-school teachers and officers. Already some progress is being made under the lead-

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ership of gifted and devoted persons who have gained the confidence of children and young people and who have mastered the art of guiding their activities.

KNOWING, DOING AND WANTING

A boy may read stories of courage, valor, and the rewards of great effort, and yet not show courage, exhibit valor, or stick to a job until it is done. One may have a great deal of knowledge concerning the traits of character of the leading figures in the Bible and yet not apply those traits in his own living. *Knowing* what is right and *doing* what is right are quite different. Note again that man never does something for nothing. Knowing how to act is no assurance that he will act that way. The *want* is lacking. We act because we have *wants* to be satisfied. As there is a vast difference between knowing what is right and doing what is right, so there is a further difference in *wanting* to do what is right. We must not only know what the right act is, and then perform it, but the *doing* must be accompanied by a satisfaction, if a want is to be built up for doing it next time. The psychologist says that in this way

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we build up an *attitude* toward right acting. Just here the term "ideal" finds forceful expression. When we have knowledge of what a right act is and when we have a real desire or want to make the performance of that act a trait of our personality, we are said to have an ideal.⁶

It is here that we touch the very nerve of the problem of Christian education. Through its instrumentalities we may hope to create a *want* to think, to act, and to feel according to ideals and spiritual standards of Jesus. Such a want has its roots penetrating deeply into the æsthetic feelings and the emotions. As Fosdick suggests, "Religion is a well-spring of character inspired by the assurance that something in the universe abides forever, grows and bears fruit at last." Christianity helps us take command of our emotions and feelings. With these at the helm we experience the most powerful and dynamic want known to mankind. We strive to do God's will.

⁶ For a clear and interesting discussion of ideals and the special problems of teaching ideals the reader is referred to *Teaching of Ideals*, Charters, W. W., The Macmillan Company.

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Some time, perhaps, we shall be able to integrate the teaching and experiencing of this ideal with our knowledge of biology in relation to the origin and control of life processes. Seemingly, sex education in the hands of thoughtful parents and trained teachers will find its most fruitful expression in the study of one's own feelings in the light of God's purposes, our knowledge of physiology and hygiene, and our control of the sex impulse. Certainly, that powerful native tendency will continue to be misdirected in the lives of youth unless it is understood biologically and unless it is harmonized with the eternal purpose of life and happiness.

AIMS OF CHRISTIAN TEACHING

Like the successful hunter, the teacher must set and hold his aim. Like the traveler, he must know whither he is bound. Jesus stated his aim clearly as he said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." The broad aim of Christian teaching is to create a *want* for the kind of life which Jesus brought and taught. To provide opportunities so that pupils may acquire the knowledge, attitudes,

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and skills in living the Christian way, is therefore a basic aim for the church school.

The more pointed and specific an aim becomes, the more sure the teacher is of attaining it. Accordingly, it is helpful to select certain elements in the broad aim stated above as subordinate objectives. One leader⁷ of wide experience suggests the following specific objectives in Christian teaching:

1. Consciousness of God and relationship to him.

2. An understanding and appreciation of the personality, life, and teachings of Jesus, and a conscious acceptance of him and loyalty to his cause.

3. A progressive development of Christlike character.

4. The ability and disposition to share in the building of a Christian social order.

5. The ability and disposition to participate effectively in the life and work of the church.

6. A Christian interpretation of life and the universe and the development of a Christian philosophy of life.

7. A knowledge of the Bible and other religious heritages of the race.

⁷ Vieth, Paul H., *Teaching for Christian Living*, Bethany Press, p. 29.

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Each one of these seven objectives may be broken up into more specific abilities, attitudes, habits, and ideals. The achievement of such a comprehensive set of aims is a large order, indeed, yet the church school must not stop short of it in guiding pupil living.

CHAPTER III

TEACHING SPIRITUAL VALUES

“KNOW that we are still even now in Alexandria. Do not fidget if, at the general return, I stay in Alexandria. I pray and beseech you, take care of the little child, and as soon as we have our wages I will send you up something. If you are delivered, if it was a male, let it live; if it was a female, cast it out.”¹

Thus reads in part a letter, found recently in Egypt, from a young husband to his wife, written about the time of Jesus. A few years earlier it was the custom of the Greek father to call for his new-born son. If it was deformed in any way, he calmly broke its back across his knee. The period about the year 30 was hard and merciless. Slavery prevailed. At this distance it is hard to picture how soul-devastating slavery was. The slave was robbed of every right with which nature had endowed him. With men,

¹ Diessman, *Light from the Ancient East*, p. 154.

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thieving, lying, filth, and drudgery were the accepted lot. With women, it was unspeakably worse. The crucifixion of criminals further illustrates the harsh and relentless lack of feeling for one's fellow beings. Living, sometimes for days in an agony that cannot be imagined, the living flesh of the victim was fed upon by flocks of crows.

The Romans were rulers over Palestine. In religion they were pagan. Their beliefs sought expression in artistic splendor, architecture, and elaborate ceremonies. Many of the gods venerated by the early Greeks were preserved and many new ones were added. Ten thousand and more gods menaced every act which was performed. One constantly was infringing upon the authority of some god. There seemed to be no connection between morals and religion; loose sex morality was even tolerated by the temple ceremonies. With the many gods to worship and the complications which ensued, superstitions of varied and ridiculous sorts were accepted as authentic guides to life.

Into such a maelstrom of life came Jesus. It is a mistake to think that it was easier to find God then than it is to-day. Contrast

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our Christian progress in schools, hospitals, missions, art, music, charity for the needy and our love of the beautiful in life with the debauching handicaps to understanding and loving God in Jesus' time. It is hard for us to picture the intricate difficulties which Jesus faced. Even the chosen people of God, who had twenty centuries of instruction and leadership behind them, opposed his teaching. Yet no single force in the history of mankind has so *changed* the thoughts and feelings of men. In the next chapter we shall seek to understand how Jesus taught his powerful message. Perhaps through such study we shall be able to teach his religion more effectively in our time.

THE RELIGION OF JESUS

"There lies the greatest leader of men the world has ever seen. Now he belongs to the ages," declared Stanton, as he gazed upon the bier of the martyred Lincoln. How frequently our celebration of the birthday of the great emancipator utterly disregards the kind of citizenship which he lived and taught! Our orations and our thoughts dwell extensively upon matters concerning Lin-

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coln—his birthplace, his early struggles, his rise to high office, his stories; but how deeply do we ponder his ideals in terms of putting them into practice now? Some of the bickerings and palaver in our legislative halls seems far removed from his aspirations for a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Is it not clear that we are greatly concerned, oftentimes, *about* Lincoln and too little concerned with the precepts and teaching *of* Lincoln?

In quite the same way, to borrow from Fosdick, we in modern times deal much with the religion *about* Jesus and far too little with the religion *of* Jesus. The Christian religion had its beginnings in a few chosen followers learning to live by keeping company with their Teacher. Then the Master left them. Presently the followers of Christ formed churches, framed elaborate creeds, ordained rituals, and established sacraments. With the passage of time, just as we have substituted a celebration of Lincoln's Birthday for the daily use of his traits and ideals, men came to substitute the representations of Jesus—creeds, symbols, and forms—for the real experience of living as Jesus taught

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the disciples to live. Throughout church history Christian leaders have sought to restore the real vital spiritual experience for the outward and formal manifestations of Christianity. They have pleaded for a return to the simple religion of Jesus rather than a sort of arms-length religion concerning Jesus and his message.

In teaching his followers how to live Jesus exalted an intimate fellowship with God. Righteousness, purity, personal sacrifice, unselfishness, and love for one's neighbor were traits which he stressed. His teaching was simple, direct, and forcefully enriched by experiences from everyday life. Such terms as "original sin," "infant damnation," "virgin birth," "justification," "the First Cause," and the like were not on his lips. The churches presently became much concerned over explaining his origin and in advancing theories and interpretations regarding his teaching and his life. Perhaps they swung the pendulum too far. At any rate our youth to-day need and are seeking light on the Christianity which Jesus taught as a way of life. They become bewildered in the Christianity about Jesus. In the ideal

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life undoubtedly there should be a happy mingling of Jesus' religion and our most thoughtful explanations of him. From the standpoint of Christian education, however, our time and effort should be directed toward the enrichment of young lives with the spiritual values upon which Jesus built Christianity.

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In the heat of the day on the Damascus road Paul had an experience. Something happened to him. From that moment he was a *changed* man. It all occurred in a twinkling, yet nineteen centuries later we still feel the impress of that dramatic moment. That insight into the spirit of Jesus has welled up in devoted souls through the centuries. Through Francis of Assisi, Livingstone, Wesley, Bunyan, and Phillips Brooks, his spiritual power relives. It is related that a missionary, opening up what he supposed to be a new field, told his new friends of Jesus and his love for men. "Yes," they replied, "we know all about him. He was here with us. He died and we buried him on yonder hill." The earlier missionary

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had so lived the spirit of Jesus as to reflect the divine light in the souls of the new followers.

We seem to *react* to spiritual influences in quite the same way that we react to other phases of life. In the Spirit of Saint Louis as it hung in the museum there was an unseen influence which penetrated the natures of the boys who were thrilled by it. They reacted to this influence. If other distracting or more powerful influences did not dim the inspiration gained at that moment, the ideals and aspirations which the plane signified remained a guide to them in right living. It is quite probable that their experience helped them to *want* to do like Lindbergh. Aided by the presence of the plane in which the exploit was accomplished, the full meaning of the feat flashed upon them. Is it not helpful to us to consider spiritual values in much the same way? Aided by those who have been with Jesus in the spirit and by the environment of the church or the home and strengthened by an attitude of worship and prayer, we catch the spiritual guidance of the Master. It seems clear that in the early days of a Christian life spirit-

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ual insight and understanding are caught by *imitation* rather than by systematic learning. We are inspired by a symphony orchestra, a beautiful painting, a stately cathedral, a starry night, an impressive story of a life well lived, a strong sermon, the snow-capped peak of Mount Shasta. Our æsthetic emotions are stirred. In an instant we catch the meaning of the Creator of love and beauty.

This principle seems clear. The Christianity that is practiced by those who would teach it is the pattern imitated by the learner. The acts and feelings of the Christian way of living in the home or in the church school are caught up by the young life. Once the spirit is caught there is much which may be learned in its growth and use. Our feelings tend to harmonize with what we do. Selfishness cannot long continue in the absence of greedy acts. Manifesting love and affection begets love and affection. The psychologists tell us that if we get pupils to act as they would if a particular æsthetic emotion were felt, they are likely soon to feel that emotion. As a boy my homeward journey took me past a cemetery. Creepy feelings just would

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not be put down. Finally I discovered that if I straightened back my shoulders, stepped out firmly and said to myself, "There's nothing here to harm me," the creepy feelings soon vanished. It seems to be just this way in making our spiritual natures sensitive to the influence of God's will.

This principle has a definite bearing on teaching spiritual values. In a family circle in which love, courtesy, and unselfishness prevail in word and action Christian teaching will take its most effective form, namely, imitation. The Christian way of life will be witnessed by the children. Quite without their realizing it, they will assimilate such ways. Experience is conclusive that such ways penetrate deeply and make the foundation of a noble life. In the church school too, if there is an atmosphere of reverence and worship, if joyous and happy living is visible to the children, soon attitudes of reverence for God's house are acquired. Praying with children in language suited to their needs and experience is the finest way to teach them to pray. We learn Christianity by living Christian ways.

This leads to another very fundamental

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truth regarding spiritual values. True religion is an inner awakening. Spiritual values have been caught. Only when Christian teaching seeks to make more real and to encourage the growth of that which is first of all an inner control of living, can we hope for best results. Our challenge is to get pupils to *feel* the influence of spiritual forces. Unless we secure their sympathetic and wholehearted reaction to such influences as a first step, much of our effort is destined to failure.

Indeed, it is proper to ask, "How may we develop this spiritual feeling?" The answer is not too certain, because we have not focused our minds intently enough and long enough on this basic problem. Some tested suggestions seem worthy of thought. Throughout the church school increased emphasis should be placed on teaching and supervising worship suited to the various age levels. This means, first, an organization within the school which will permit of proper age groupings, and, secondly, a carefully planned program of worship, with all distracting elements removed and every available means for awakening the æsthetic emotional responses of the pupils utilized. A

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third suggestion appears in the intelligent guidance of pupils in the matter of church membership. Uniting with the church should be the natural outgrowth of desire to associate oneself with God's work. An emotional orgy, such as some of the present generation have passed through as children, is a wastage of the sacred rights of childhood and a thwarting of the finest emotions of which human beings are capable. These considerations will be discussed in later sections.

TEACHING PUPILS TO WORSHIP

"I feel that God is here," whispered a nine-year-old lad at the close of a fifteen-minute worship period in a junior department. Surely, God *was* there. There had been singing—a carefully chosen hymn—and a short prayer by the junior superintendent in which several sentence prayers were given by the children. A gifted teacher had told a beautiful story of a mother's love and sacrifice for her children, and of how she was rewarded in later life as she lived the joys of her two boys, one a successful physician and the other a great leader of men. The teacher closed her story with a short prayer

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for spiritual help in guiding the children in making their parents happy and especially in making God happy, by living the Jesus way. The program had been *well* planned. The children had been taught that there should be absolute quiet during the worship session. Repeated suggestions had been made, augmented by simple stories, that everything else be put out of one's mind during worship. They had been taught to put their whole being into the service. Conditions were created which prompted meditation. The pupils could think of God, his love for them and their love and gratitude toward him. At the close of the Lenten season and following a series of teaching periods by the pastor, all of the pupils in the senior classes of the department signified, voluntarily, that they would like to join the church on Easter Sunday.

In this incident there are at least four essential elements in guiding worship: (1) a well-planned program of worship; (2) a controlled environment and a discipline that was not forced; (3) opportunity for prayer, meditation, and directed thought in worshipping God; and (4) instruction in what it

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means to join the church which culminated in an active decision on the part of pupils. The first three elements are basic in any department of the church school. The fourth finds chief expression in the upper grades in which pupils are twelve years of age or older. The writer is convinced that the possibilities of the opening worship period for teaching pupils how to catch the spirit of the living God and how to fan the little flame into a brilliant light shining through happy and dark places alike, have scarcely been touched. If need be, less emphasis should be placed on the lesson period and more emphasis on the worship hour. As suggested earlier, unless our teaching seeks to make more real a spiritual awakening already felt, we are missing the vital point. For the most part, therefore, the lesson hour will find its chief value in selecting content and using methods that will nourish the spiritual insight.

The attitude in worship is intimately linked with certain psychological changes in youth. In girls between the ages of fifteen and sixteen years and in boys between the ages of seventeen and eighteen years a new religious problem is observable. Many of the

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questions outlined in Chapter I were proposed by young people of these ages. At these ages (closing adolescence) a distinctive mental attitude develops. Self-assertion, desire for independent thinking, doubting the traditional way of things, resisting outside authority and restraint, and attraction for the opposite sex are commonly observable traits. The great pity is that parents and teachers too frequently misunderstand this age and its problems. Two errors are common. First, it is assumed that they, the mature minds, should "hold youth in line" with the accepted religious doctrines and practices. The second, at the opposite extreme, assumes that because of the disturbing questions youth should be left alone to work out its own salvation. These advocates talk glibly about letting the youth solve his own problems by keeping his mind unhampered by outside suggestions. Both points of view are ruinously unsuccessful. The mind of the active and alert youth is going one way or the other, and too frequently it takes the turn of throwing overboard all spiritual values. In Christian education we must face this issue squarely.

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This educational problem is, of course, most acute in the young people's department of the church school. Here, as with the juniors, the worship service is of paramount importance. If the pupils are already church members, their attitudes in worship need to be sustained. If they are not members, a desire for church affiliation is not difficult to secure. This questioning frame of mind seriously affects worship. Earlier habits of devotion in worship service tend to slip. One of the most effective ways of meeting the needs of a department of young people in the worship period is to put emphasis on at least three types of activity: (1) build social and recreational features into the weekly program; (2) give as many of the young people as possible some definite responsibility in the life of the church or the department; and (3) redouble the emphasis on religious expression through prayer in public, telling stories or incidents before the group, reporting leadership conferences, planning programs and controlling the worship hour by insisting on absolute quiet.

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SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Already we have noted that our learning is improved by practice and that our practice is effective in proportion as it succeeds; and, further, that when we are ready to act, to act gives satisfaction and not to act gives annoyance. It is believed that these simple laws of the mind have definite bearing on our spiritual growth. When we have caught the inspiration of spiritual values in our lives, and when we have the vision of Jesus' message about God, we need to "grow up" in the Spirit. As we practice the traits of love, friendship, purity, righteousness, and the like, which have their origin in spiritual understanding, we make them an ever-increasing part of our personality. Presently the real satisfaction which we experience comes to our aid and strengthens our purpose and our ability to put the desired traits into daily practice. Soon a certain readiness for worship, meditation, and prayer grips us. Another of nature's allies is working for us. Around and around the circle it goes—increased joy and satisfaction, increased readi-

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ness to gain new spiritual insight, and an increased ability to do God's will.

We seem to understand a little more clearly, by the aid of the science of the mind, how men have built such marvelous spiritual towers of strength. The early Christians bore untold hardships for the sake of their Christianity. Modern missionaries are giving their all to extend the Kingdom. Modern God-loving men of science delve into the mysteries of nature and capture new truth for man's comfort and guidance. The spiritual power of Jesus lives to-day as potentially as it did nineteen centuries ago. It only remains for us to catch the influence, to push aside its impediments and to grow in its power.

Four elements appear to contribute richly to spiritual growth—solitude, inspiring experience, suggesting the nearness of God, and a knowledge of Nature and her laws.

1. It seems necessary to cut oneself free from the distractions of the world of affairs and to devote one's entire mind and energy to meditation and prayer. Spiritual hunger is as unbearable as hunger for food or thirst for water. Clicking typewriters, mechanical

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unrest, and humdrum worries separate us from spiritual nourishment as truly as though we were searching for water in a desert. We make our chief contribution to the world when we are truly ourselves. We cannot be that true self unless we are sometimes by ourselves. When we are aglow with a high purpose originated in solitude, we achieve our highest mark. Spiritual insight seems to come only when, in solitude, we concentrate upon the deeper meanings of life. At such times we may share the experience of Father Ryan, who wrote:¹

“I walk down the Valley of Silence,
Down the dim voiceless Valley, alone,
And I hear not the fall of a footstep
Around me, save God’s and my own.
And the hush of my heart is as holy
As hovers where angels have flown.

“In the hush of the Valley of Silence,
I dream all the songs that I sing.
The music floats down the dim Valley,
Till each finds a word for a wing,
That to hearts, like the dove of the Deluge,
A message of Peace they may bring.

¹ Ryan, Rev. Abram J., “Song of the Mystic,” P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York.

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"But far on the deep are billows
That never shall break on the beach.
So I have heard songs in the Valley
That never shall break into speech.
And I have had dreams in the Silence
Too lofty for language to reach."

2. Certain experiences seem to arouse our æsthetic emotions. Walking alone on a starlit night, picking our way along the rim of the Grand Canyon, worshiping in a cathedral, or listening to symphonic or sacred music, our very soul seems stirred. Such experiences as these stimulate our finer natures and tend to make more sensitive our reactions to spiritual values. Obviously, the repetition of such experiences as appeal to one's particular nature increases its sensitivity.

3. There seems to be great advantage in suggesting to ourselves the nearness and presence of the kingdom of God within. By applying the principle of acting as if an emotion were present (see page 61) and developing the self-suggestion of the kingdom of God within us, it is believed that our reaction to its presence and our realization of it are strengthened. It is quite like Coué's

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dictum, "Every day, in every way, I am better and better." The suggestion of nearness and intimacy appears to be a powerful factor in building spiritual insight.

4. Thoughtful study of the world of nature and of man himself should deepen, immeasurably, our reverence and love of the Creator of the universe. When on that starry night some twenty-eight centuries ago the psalmist in an ecstasy of feeling declared, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork," it is probable he did not have the slightest notion of the expanse of the universe, or of the intricacies of matter. The beauty of the heavens appealed to him. But with the advent of our expanding knowledge of astronomy and of electrons, our understanding widens. Heavenly distances cannot be measured by a mere mile or tens of thousands of miles. The astronomer devises his own measure—the light year. Light travels at the rate of 186,000 miles per second—seven times around the globe in our smallest measure of time. Consider the most recent estimates of the size of the universe: three hundred trillion light years in length and about

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a tenth as broad. Such a calculation of distance is beyond the layman's power to grasp.

Turn to the realm of matter and consider the opposite extreme in size and distance. One scientist suggests that there are about two billion people on the earth. If each person had five hundred million dollars, then the total number of dollars would not equal the number of atoms in a drop of water. Each atom is further subdivided into electrons. If an atom were magnified to the size of an ordinary dwelling house, an electron would be the size of a bird shot. Is this imagination? To the trained scientist, not at all. Radio, X-rays, and television bear witness to the reality of electrons.

If David could give expression to his feelings by declaring the glory of God in the heavens and on earth, how much more should our feelings be thrilled by God's glory. We have knowledge of which David and his contemporaries did not dream. Our understanding of God as the Creator of the universe should strengthen our reverence for him. Link with this reverence Jesus' teaching of God the Father and his love for each personality and our emotions ascend to

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the highest peaks of human understanding. Tennyson's classic lines help us to ascend such peaks:

"Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand.
Little flower—but *if* I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is."

THE IDEA OF GOD

Younger pupils often gain fantastic ideas of God. Even older pupils find difficulty in expressing themselves regarding God as a Spirit. They strive, frequently, to visualize God in terms of their experience gained through the five senses. Of course trying to create a mental picture of God, locating God in the universe and describing God in language suited to material things, must fail. The thoughtful teacher faces the challenge of presenting and nurturing the idea of God in the experiences of pupils. Indeed, this is one of the most difficult responsibilities of the church school. Two suggestions may be appropriate.

First, it seems best to teach the idea of God as Jesus presented it, namely, that he

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is an infinite and benevolent Father. The comparison of this idea of God with the attributes of an earthly father is an effective way of relating a new idea to an old experience. In this way the characteristics of benevolence, kindly care, watchful guidance, forgiveness of errors, and tender emotions of an earthly father may be made the basis of gaining an idea of the Fatherhood of God. Likewise the traits of trust, faith, love, friendship, and the desire to please an earthly father form a sound starting point for teaching the qualities of sonship with God.

Secondly, we may teach the idea of God through a study of his activities and his works. Since God is a Spirit he cannot have material form. Time, space, and materials constitute our means of knowledge in the realm of matter. With spirit such measures of material being are useless because spirit is not concerned with time, does not occupy space, and has no material qualities. Accordingly it is futile to attempt any image of God in such terms. We may, however, gain knowledge of him through evidences of his presence. We cannot weigh love, courtesy,

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or appreciation. We cannot have a mental image of radio or of gravity. When we go into a home where love and courtesy prevail, we see the evidences of these attributes in happy lives, joyous living, and whole-hearted seeking for the good of the entire family. Likewise we witness the evidences of radio activity as we turn the dial of a receiving set, and the effects of gravity as we visit the powerful turbines at Niagara Falls. As we believe in radio and gravity, love and courtesy because of their evidences in our lives, so we may conceive of God in terms of what he does in the universe and for us as individuals. Experience in church-school teaching points to this device as an effective means of teaching the idea of God in the various departments. As pupils gain new experience, an increasing number of the activities of God may be added. Jesus declared, "God is love." Evidences of that love toward his children should constitute a climax in teaching the idea of God through his works.

Our knowledge of God is a matter of ever-widening human experience. As we come to realize the intricate physical world, as we

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penetrate the mysteries of the human mind and as spirit meets with Spirit, we grow in our understanding of God. We find the experiences of the religious leaders, past and present, reliving in ourselves. From small beginnings our idea of God becomes centered in an ever-strengthening conviction concerning him and our part in his eternal plan. In teaching the idea of God to children let us remember that religious experience is a matter of growth, for, as Paul suggests, "When I was a child I thought as a child." The simpler ideas of God must be nurtured and expanded to meet new and changing life experiences. Too often the childish idea of God is not widened to keep pace with the experiences of the growing youth, with the result that the idea suited to child nature will not stand the strain of youthful reasoning and adult problems.

THE VALUE OF PRAYER

Prayer is the language of the soul. Deeply seated in our natures is a tendency to pray. When through meditation and study we become convinced that God cares for us as individuals we begin to sense the reality of

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prayer. If we allow the tendency for prayer to remain unexpressed, we seem to lose our grip on God as our loving Father. Prayer helps us to lay hold of God's love and protection and to make them real in our experience. Prayer is born of need. We have a want to be satisfied, a desire to be granted. Saint Anthony has put the thought clearly in his words, "We pray as much as we desire and we desire as much as we love." Thus prayer is our active means of growing in the Spirit. Through prayer we get in tune with God's purposes for our lives and open wide the gates of our entire being to perceive new truth and to know God's will for us. God seeks us before we seek him. Through prayer we express our willingness to be found by God and to devote ourselves unreservedly to his purposes.

Guiding pupils in prayer is perhaps our most effective means of assisting them in spiritual growth. As already suggested the teacher's best means of prayer instruction is through prayer with the pupils. Then they learn to pray by praying, both audibly and silently. It is believed that considerable time should be taken in the various depart-

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ments in discussing with pupils the meaning and value of prayer as a powerful force in Christian living. During the worship periods such discussions, when coupled with a study of the Lord's Prayer and the prayers of Christian leaders, will focus attention on this means of worship and growth.

In teaching the use and meaning of prayer in the church school adopt a sane point of view and one which harmonizes with the lives and experiences of men. In a time of severe drought state frankly that the suggestion to "pray for rain" is in the realm of childish whims. What possible connection can there be between one's inner spiritual attitude and the meteorological forces of the atmosphere? Hiding behind the assertion that "God controlled the elements in Bible times and therefore he could control them now," or that "God made the weather, therefore he could change it," does irreparable harm among pupils in the upper grades. In our brief study we cannot pause for a consideration of the detailed problems of teaching in reference to prayer, even though the urge is tempting. We must be content with one major suggestion cited above. Strengthen

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our sane point of view in prayer by teaching that it is not Christian to beg and coax God for things, events, or attitudes which are out of harmony with the divine plan. Emphasize that personal relationships—man with man and man with God—constitute the chief realm of prayer. A disturbing fact is that we are developing Christian activities in our church schools more rapidly than we are building Christian faith and the vital experiences of prayer. In these pages we have stressed the principle that spiritual awakening is first caught, and that the newly discovered experience may be nurtured through teaching. There is no substitute for prayer, either in creating a desire for a “re-birth” or in developing the experience into a noble life of faith and service.

CHAPTER IV

JESUS, THE MASTER-TEACHER

JESUS remains the Master-Teacher of men. From that early day when as Teacher he gathered the little band about him, to the present, he is the central figure in the art and science of teaching. He taught in the Temple, in a boat on the lake, on the summit of a hill, by the wayside, and in the hamlets. He instructed his disciples, privately and in secluded places. He seemed to realize that spiritual understanding and new ideals of living could be acquired only by the medium of personal guidance and teaching. His messages of love and service, his new thought of the Fatherhood of God, the kingdom of God within, and his simple but powerful dictum, "Follow me," burned their way into the hearts and minds of the disciples. In our study of the problems of Christian education it will be helpful to center our thought on the materials and methods which Jesus employed. The magnetic personality of such a Teacher, the numerous facts regarding his

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work, and the labyrinth of situations in which he taught, make such a study exceedingly difficult. Perhaps the basic elements of his masterful art may be traced most effectively by considering briefly the aims which he sought to accomplish, the methods and devices which he used and the content of his teaching.

JESUS' AIMS IN TEACHING

Love toward God and man is Jesus' ideal for happy and useful living. "It is by this that everyone will recognize you as my disciples"¹ (John 13. 35). Such love and reverence for God and such good will and friendship toward men will result in service for others. Jesus places supreme emphasis on these ideals as guides to our moral and spiritual lives and embodies these elements of Christian living in the form of the Golden Rule. This simple guide to action, when practiced, aids the followers of Jesus to understand and to enter the kingdom of God.

Jesus came to a hard and merciless world. Traditional church forms and ceremonies

¹ The quotations from the New Testament made in this chapter are made from The Twentieth Century New Testament. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York.

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were the accepted means of religious expression. Outward displays of piety and almsgiving were in direct opposition to the new ideals of Jesus. He taught that such expressions did not make worthy character and noble lives. The very essence of his aims in teaching is in *doing* and in *living*. His familiar declarations, "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only," "By their fruits ye shall know them," "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven," and "Why do you call me Master, and yet fail to do what I tell you?" point to his desire to have his followers embody his ideals of love and service in daily practice. The churchmen of his day scrubbed and polished the outside of the cup from which they drank and left the inside unclean. Jesus penetrated their formalism and at the same time drove home a vital message of inner purity, as he berated them: "Hypocrites that you are because you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, while inside they are full of the fruits of grasping and of greed and self-indulgence" (Matt. 23. 25).

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Jesus' aims of teaching were centered about inner purity, self-mastery, service to others, friendship and love toward man, and love and loyalty toward God. If one's mind were clean and wholesome, and if one's heart were pure, right thoughts and feelings would result. If one *did* and *lived* according to these thoughts and feelings the new kingdom of God "within" could be realized. Nothing could be more simple and direct. Thus Jesus, long before our modern studies in education, put his major aim in teaching on right living. This aim in Christian teaching stands forth to-day as a flaming challenge to the church school.

In seeking to achieve this exalted aim it is inspiring to note the masterful way in which Jesus met the challenge. In his time Judaism had fixed standards. The Jews thought of themselves as the chosen people of God. Salvation was assured to the sons of Abraham who kept the law and who were circumcised. The rabbis kept the Scriptures and interpreted them to the faithful. Those who did what the rabbis taught, kept the commandments of Moses and observed the ceremonies of the Temple, were promised

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the blessings of God. It is little wonder that the people stood aghast at the doctrine of a cleansed inner life. But Jesus' aim prevailed. Down the centuries comes the record of man's attempt to live the Christian life, until in our time some half a billion people are striving more or less to achieve his ideals.

HOW DID JESUS TEACH

The artful teacher conceals his art. His method is so natural and so commonplace that it does not attract attention. Most of us can recall the dynamic personality of some teacher who influenced us greatly, yet we would find it hard to tell just why we were moved. When we approach the study of the methods of Jesus we are in much the same difficulty. However, all successful teachers have a plan of action. Their art is in the concealment of the method by informal and close personal relations between teacher and learner. In our effort to examine the methods which Jesus used we must not lose sight of his complete personality. A grave danger in studying the work of a great leader is that of getting so close to a particu-

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lar detail as to lose its setting in achieving a basic purpose.

Note first of all that Jesus seemed to choose the most natural settings for his teaching. He taught on the hillside, from a boat, along the wayside, and in the villages. "When he had sat down his disciples came unto him; and he began to teach them" (Matt. 5. 1), writes Matthew. His manner, which seemed characteristically informal, encouraged the interest of his hearers and stimulated them to ask questions. Here we touch the very heart of Jesus' method. He knew that real thinking begins in a problem or a "felt difficulty." We think best when there is some obstruction to our thoughts—a life problem to be solved. Three hundred years before Jesus, Aristotle had declared, "All knowledge starts in wonder." The questions of the pupils on page 15 indicate that they were searching for knowledge. Jesus skillfully uses problems and questions as a means of teaching. Three ways seem apparent: he encouraged his hearers to state their own problems, he sought to stimulate or awaken the question in their minds, he used

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the barbed questions of his enemies to teach his vital truth.

The use of the question already in the mind of his hearer is illustrated by the problem of the wealthy young man who came to him for counsel, the problem of Peter, perplexed over the number of times he should forgive his friend, and the inquiry regarding who would have the exalted place in the Kingdom. These and numerous other problems gave Jesus opportunities to teach a fundamental truth in addition to solving the immediate question at hand. Sometimes Jesus skillfully suggested a question in order to prompt thought. Reread the story of the woman of Samaria. Note the artful question of Jesus and the subsequent statement regarding her inner life. She seems to wonder that he, a Jew, would speak to her. She still marvels as she hears of the "living water," until finally she is touched by the question which penetrates to the depths of her soul. On another occasion Jesus implies a problem by explaining why he gave the parable of the sower. Note also the direct challenge of the question to Peter, whose innermost thought was stirred with the query,

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"Simon, son of John, are you more devoted to me than the others are?"

When opinions differ, it has long been our practice to propose a question that will trap or muddle the opponent. Jesus' enemies were bitter against him and sought every chance to trap him. In such questions as these we find Jesus rising to supreme heights in the teaching art. His turning of the dilemma back upon the questioner, and his barbed shafts of insight into human nature have been an inspiration to all students of teaching. "Whose head and title are these?" parried Jesus, as they hoped to trap him in a matter of loyalty to the government. "The emperor's," came the answer. "Then pay to the emperor what belongs to the emperor and to God what belongs to God," quickly responded Jesus. By the skillful question and answer he shifted the emphasis from political to spiritual values. It is not strange that "they wondered at him." The Gospels abound in examples of Jesus' use of his critics' questions. The problems of plucking corn on the Sabbath, curing the sick on sacred days, and the woman marrying seven husbands will be recalled readily.

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May not the ability of Jesus to deal so pointedly with life problems be attributed, in part at least, to his marvelous insight into our natures? Very often in the Gospels he gives evidence of such an insight. "When Jesus became conscious of the way in which they were debating" (Luke 5. 22); "Knowing their hypocrisy Jesus said to them" (Mark 12. 15); "Jesus knew from the first who they were that did not believe" (John 6. 65); "He could read every heart, and because he had no need for others to tell him about any man, he could of himself read what there was in a man" (John 2. 25); "Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said" (Matt. 9. 4); and "Jesus, however, was aware of what was passing in their minds, and said to them" (Matt. 12. 25), are examples familiar to the thoughtful reader. With this matchless understanding of human nature he went directly to the heart of individual problems of life. Theories of religion and suppositions of the mind are conspicuously lacking. Whether his questioners were sympathetic followers or hostile critics, he drove straight to the heart of the problem of each person present. When he felt that the persons at

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hand could not grasp the meaning of his truth, he deferred telling it to them. For example: "I have still much to say to you, but you cannot bear it at present" (John 16. 12); "It is not everyone who can accept this teaching" (Matt. 19. 11); "Jesus used to tell the people his message as far as they were able to receive it" (Mark 4. 33). When such lack of understanding appeared, Jesus seemed to stress in simple language and by repetition and illustration his deeper meanings.

Again, Jesus was master of the art of connecting the old with the new. The modern psychologist calls this apperception. The good teacher relates the new experience to those experiences which his pupils have had already. Step by step new knowledge and new experience are added. Upon the commandments laid down by Moses Jesus builds two supreme commandments—"Love God, and Love thy neighbor." He points out with great clearness that sin starts in the mind. He contrasts the commandment of the Mosaic law, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," with his new thought, "Any one who looks at a woman with a lustful intent

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has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5. 28). Earlier in the chapter he stresses also that anger is the beginning of murder. He makes clear to his hearers that he is fulfilling the law as he declares, "Do not imagine that I have come to do away with the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to do away with them but to complete them" (Matt. 5. 17). Then, in at least a half-dozen references, he links his teachings regarding the inner life with the experiences of the Jews as recorded in Scripture with the words, "You have heard that it was said, . . . but I say to you." He started where they were and sought to carry them out into new and larger life experience.

In the early months of his ministry Jesus seems to choose the direct statement to the multitudes who flocked to hear him. His declarations regarding the kingdom of God, the forgiveness of sin, and the call to follow him met with a meager response. Then he appeared to concentrate on the training of the Twelve to carry forward the great program. It is in this intimate teaching of the Twelve that we find him using the parables,

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which number more than thirty, to make more clear his message, and to penetrate the deeper truths of the Kingdom. By their use Jesus sought to attract the attention of his hearers through comparisons with everyday activities. They were more likely to remember the life incident and to reflect upon its deeper and spiritual meaning. If they could not grasp the full meaning at the time, the parable remained clearly in their mind, and at some future time its spiritual significance would flash upon them. We should note here that Jesus' parables, though in direct harmony with life situations, did not necessarily portray actual happenings.

Jesus employed still another device for capturing the interest of the people. Successful leaders often resort to an epigram or terse saying to capture public interest. "Food will win the war," "Making the world safe for democracy" have been used recently. Jesus knew the value of such catch expressions as shown by his sayings: "Many who are first now, will then be last, and the last will be first" (Mark 10. 31); "While many are invited, few are chosen" (Matt. 22. 14); "Whoever wishes to save his life

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will lose it, and whoever, for my sake, and for the sake of the Good News, will lose his life, will save it" (Mark 8. 35); "When a kingdom is at variance within itself, it cannot last; and when a household is at variance within itself, it will be unable to last" (Mark 3. 24).

WHAT DID JESUS TEACH?

The Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the kingdom of God are the corner stones on which Jesus built the foundation for his content of instruction to accomplish his aims in teaching. Centuries earlier men had worshiped gods as being in things such as rocks, trees, the sea, or the lightning. Then came the Jewish leaders who taught *one* God of infinite wisdom, supreme majesty and marvelous power. To this, Jesus added the conception of God as *Father*. Protecting care, pity, forgiveness, and boundless love were the chief characteristics which Jesus attributed to him. Human beings became the children of God when they loved him and when they partook of his beneficent protection, pity, and forgiveness.

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The idea of God as "King" is also expanded by Jesus. As a king rules over a kingdom, so God was conceived of as Ruler in the "kingdom of God." Jesus shifted the emphasis of the Hebrews from a kingdom of material things and happenings to a kingdom in which spiritual values were supreme. In the spiritual "kingdom of God," Jesus made the qualities of love, service, humility, purity, and the like the supreme tests for admission. Such ideals could be acquired only by gradual growth, by *doing* and by *living*. He regarded the kingdom of God as a reality to be enjoyed and participated in here and now, as well as in a future state beyond the grave. Cleansing one's soul from within, and the mastery of one's thoughts, feelings, and actions because of an intense desire to become a child of God and to live in his Kingdom, were central in Jesus' teaching.

It is the sacred right of all men to become the children of God. Jesus taught, however, that to receive such a birthright we must strive for the divine qualities of love, humility, service, and similar good which God requires of us. Having acquired admission to the divine kingdom through liv-

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ing such ideals, it follows that we should be brothers in one big family. When we become conscious of this brotherly relationship and sonship to God, a common sympathy and brotherly love will unite us naturally into a new life of understanding, happiness, and usefulness. Such filial relations, Jesus held, should control our relations with each other, whether friend or enemy. Herein resides one of the unique and fundamental truths in all of Jesus' teaching. He regarded a spiritual experience as the basis of morals and ethics. When we become aware of our intimate relation with God in his kingdom the desire for immoral and unethical conduct vanishes. We have found our true selves.

"The wages of sin is death," declared Paul, as he stressed the utter separation of sin and spiritual sonship with God. We cannot sin and be children of God. Jesus likens us in our human affairs to the lost sheep, the lost coin, the dead limb of a tree, spoiled fruit, and diseased bodies. In striking language Paul at many points stresses how sin separates us from God. Sin has its origin from within rather than from without the

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human soul. "For out of the heart proceed suggestions of wickedness, whether murder, adultery, unchastity, theft, perjury, or slander" (Matt. 15. 19), said Jesus. The high standard of inner control was placed above the mere observance of rituals or the abstinence from eating this or that.

Jesus is quite explicit regarding membership in the Kingdom. He declares that "whoever slanders the Holy Spirit remains unforgiven to the end; he has to answer for an enduring sin" (Mark 3. 29). On other occasions Jesus excludes from membership those who do not make the best of their opportunities (Matt. 25. 24) and those who have weak hearts and turn back (Luke 9. 62). Again he takes the Pharisees to task for neglecting the weightier matters of "justice, mercy and good faith" (Matt. 23. 23). To him the inner motive was the beginning of sin. A sinner could "turn back," or, as we have come to say, "be converted" and start anew to be guided by spiritual resources. The possibilities and worth of a soul received his constant emphasis. Sin thwarted the soul's growth. Guided by our spiritual resources we develop into God's

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likeness and thereby secure the blessings of being in the Kingdom. Jesus distinguished between the sinner and the sin committed. He had infinite faith in the Spirit in redirecting the motives and lives of men.

Thus, Jesus sought to teach men to redirect their lives in accordance with God's will. Through his teaching of the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the qualities necessary to be practiced in order to enter the Kingdom, he revealed what God's will is. Then, in a supreme and complete way, he embodied God's truth and God's will in his own life and death. He taught his own Sonship with God through the union of his life with the Father, through living in harmony with God's will and through prayer and meditation in overcoming sin and temptations. His death was the final and supreme test of submitting his will to that of the Father. With expectant certainty he foresaw his death at the hands of his enemies. Forsaken first by the multitudes, then by his own town's people and his own family, and finally by his disciples, he met death alone. The union of his will and God's will in the darkest hour remains

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through the centuries our blessed assurance of enduring truth and spiritual supremacy.

TEACHING AS JESUS TAUGHT

In our time can we teach as Jesus taught? Can we approach his masterful method? Can we teach the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the kingdom of God as he did? If we devote ourselves to the study of Jesus and his life, an affirmative answer seems clear. A few simple applications may here be made concerning how and what he taught. His threefold use of the problem, the parable and the epigram has been pointed out; likewise his impressive emphasis on active *doing* and *living* in accordance with a new understanding of spiritual values.

Method in teaching is merely a way of acting to get desired results. It is arranging and controlling opportunities so that pupils may grow in the right way. There is no best method. The device which brings the pupil to the desired living in the best way is the most appropriate method. Providing a game, discussing a problem, hiking in the woods, reading a book, worshiping together,

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or reading Scripture to find suggestions in a present-day difficulty may all contribute to the growth of a class of high-school freshmen. The important point is that the method chosen must enrich the life experience of pupils. How skillfully Jesus chose the "problem" as a device to enrich experience! Someone was in difficulty and presented a question. Again, Jesus suggested questions to stimulate the thinking of a pupil. Finally he used the doubts and queries of those who held different opinions to teach a vital message. In all of our study of the science of education we still cling to the "problem" as a sound basis of guiding pupil growth. When there are problems to be solved, the pupil is *ready* to learn, for he has a *want* to be satisfied. In recent years "projects" and "life situations" have been urged as effective teaching devices. Both have their roots in problem solving. Kilpatrick, the famous exponent of the "project," suggests that a pupil activity, to function as a project, should (a) be purposeful from the standpoint of the pupil, (b) be planned by the pupil, (c) executed by the pupil, (d) judged by the pupil. Charters

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adds an additional element, that the project should be carried out in a natural setting. A project may range from physical activity with tools, crayon, paper and pencil to a worship service or a musical program. Pupils learn spiritual values in purposeful living.

Earlier it was suggested that spiritual insight is caught first from others. Therefore a setting in which pupils of similar age groups may worship, sing, pray, and study together under wise leadership offers excellent opportunities for religious training. Pupils learn much more by imitation and by suggestion than we imagine. We tend to copy the acts, attitudes, ideals and so forth of our associates. Pupils tend to be reverent in an environment where others are reverent. Here, of course, is the great influence of family life in building attitudes and ideals. Jesus' idea of the brotherhood of man and the kingdom of God seems to have special significance in view of this human trait of imitating others. If there is intolerance of creeds or races at home, intolerance in children may be expected. If the church-school worship period is noisy, if irreverence

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is allowed, if thoughtful worship is not encouraged, the results of such conditions will be transferred to later grades or into the life of the church.

The parable and epigram are effective devices in teaching Christian living. Words are understood only as they may reflect an experience which the pupil has had. Spiritual values, since they are outside the realm of the five senses, are sometimes difficult to understand. The parables link a spiritual truth with an everyday happening. It is the connecting link between an experience in material things and a desirable experience in spiritual understanding. Jesus once told Peter that he should think like God and not like man. An intimate knowledge of the thirty or more parables of Jesus will assist the teacher in making clear solutions to present-day problems. From the parables it is but a step to the use of present-day illustrations common in the lives of pupils, to re-enforce teaching.

The catch phrasing of an epigram helps to keep the words in mind. The pointed phrases which Jesus used are especially valuable in answering spiritual inquiries. They

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tell a great truth in a few words. When an epigram has meaning in terms of a present-day life situation, pupils will find profit in committing it to memory.

The church school touches pupils for only a small portion of each week. Accordingly, every possible situation should be devised, such as worship periods, study periods, pageants, dramas, lectures, entertainments, and recreational activities, to guide the living of pupils so that right attitudes and ideals may be observed, imitated, and practiced. Likewise pupils should be shielded, so far as possible, from such influence as undesirable books, associates, movies, and pictures. Recent studies in the field of character education point to the importance of pupils' "functioning socially" in a satisfactory manner. We do not learn one trait at a time. Rather we acquire the conduct which embodies love, friendliness, service and other similar qualities by whole-hearted and purposeful living in a normal, everyday sort of way. We seem to acquire such traits "all at once" by right living. Here again we note how Jesus touched the nerve of the matter. When our thoughts and feelings are in har-

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mony with God, and when sin is striven against, the joys and satisfactions of living in the "Kingdom" come to our aid in brotherly actions. Quite without our realizing it the whole personality is enriched.

Problem solving and right living go hand in hand. In the class periods Jesus' three-fold use of questions in teaching has a unique place in our effort, especially in the upper grades. Pupils will raise their real problems if given an opportunity and encouraged so to do and will give thoughtful consideration to life values. The carefully prepared question, to focus thought on important ethical, social, civic, or religious issues of life, is basic in good teaching. To most young people comes a time of doubt and question concerning the customary and accepted order of things. There is no better way of teaching Christian living than by meeting squarely the sharp accusations or narrow opinions of the searcher after new truth. Perhaps the youth is not searching, but, like the enemies of Jesus, is seeking to trap the teacher. The opportunity for forceful teaching is thus greatly enlarged.

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ILLUSTRATIONS OF PROBLEM TEACHING

The following illustrations are presented to assist the inexperienced teacher in the use of the problem in teaching. Two of them are chosen from the problems listed in an earlier chapter. Case 3 relates to the use of the question in stimulating thought in the minds of pupils:

Case 1

A group of upper-grade junior boys was studying the lives of selected Hebrew leaders, and a brief review had occupied the first part of the discussion. The character of Daniel had been considered the previous Sunday and one of the older lads was beginning to manifest some uneasiness with reference to the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who refused to bow down and worship the idol which the king had set up. He was encouraged to state what was troubling him. Then came the question.

Pupil's question. "How could the three young friends of Daniel be thrown into the hot furnace and not even be singed? It sounds to me like a fairy story."

Class discussion. "That's what I think," chimed in others. Here was a vital problem to be solved. Having anticipated such a problem coming from the boys, the teacher was quick to grasp the opportunity to direct the boys' thought toward

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certain basic elements. In outline, the following points were discussed:

The characters of the young men who were willing to withstand the threats of death by the king.

The quality of faith in God and the determined will to serve and worship him rather than to bow down to a golden idol.

The "back-bone" that was required to stand out alone in that multitude and disobey the king when the easy and popular thing to do was to be one of the crowd.

The obedience on the part of the young men to the teaching of Daniel, their leader.

The final reward for their determination to stand by what they believed. They succeeded in converting the king to their way of thinking and worshipping the one true God.

Attention was then centered on the problem of their being thrown into the furnace without being burned. A little test was devised to develop the fact that many persons may witness an incident or observe things and report differently regarding what they saw. Fifteen different objects were placed on the table in a given order. The boys were allowed thirty seconds to observe them. Then the objects were removed and each boy was asked to list on paper the things which he observed in the order in which they were placed on the table. Their widely different reports were made

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the basis of presenting the fact that it is difficult for persons to see an incident and then render an accurate account of what they saw. The different accounts of an event in different newspapers was mentioned as an illustration of the varying abilities of persons to report events. At the close of the activity the point was stressed that it would have been easy for the event to be exaggerated by those who saw it, especially if the account had not been written down until some later date.

Another point was made in discussion, namely, that those ancient peoples believed in witchcraft. They seemed to feel that religion could be presented more strongly if some mysterious and miraculous happenings could be brought in. Reference was made to several Old Testament illustrations of this tendency, such as the burning bush, smiting the rock from whence water came, and Jonah and the great fish.

Concluding point. An effort was made to present the following points to the group:

In the Bible we must distinguish between facts of science and moral or religious truth. The fact that the Bible is true does not mean that all the statements in it are true, because knowledge changes from time to time. What the people in Daniel's time thought were facts on science we now know are not facts at all. The Bible is our great storehouse of truth in ideals and morals and in spiritual living. In order to convey to their readers these

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spiritual truths the early writers used poetry, dreams, and fiction to make their points clear. Not everything told in the Bible actually happened. The stories of the Bible help to make clear the religious truths which they contain.

The story of Daniel's young friends teaches, among other things, the lesson of faith and steadfastness in God. These young men would not be frightened by the king, even upon threat of death. They held fast to their belief in God.

Application. In summarizing the discussion certain applications of the experience of the young men were made in everyday living. The boys were asked to bring to class the following Sunday incidents in which they could note the characteristics of these young men.

Case 2

In a class of second-year high-school boys two of the members were studying economic geography. Near the Christmas season one of them proposed this question: "How could Jesus have been born on December 25th when the flocks were not pastured by night at that season of the year in that country?"

The boy was complimented for his insight into the relation between seasonal change and our celebration of Jesus' birth. In explanation of the question attention was drawn to the fact that

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we are not certain of either the month or the year of Jesus' birth. It is probable that the early Christians celebrated Jesus' birthday on December 25th because that was the season of the year when the Romans conducted a general holiday season, in memory of their gods. It was quite natural that the Christians adopted this season as the time for celebrating the birth of their Saviour.

The further point was made that the exact date is unimportant. The vital element is that we celebrate his birth at a given time of the year, just as we celebrate other events in his life at definite times of the year.

Case 3

In a group of junior and senior year high-school pupils there were two boys who were passing through the critical stage of doubting the reality of religious values and especially the existence of a future life. In spite of the teacher's efforts to guide the class discussions apart from such elements which are more properly left for adult consideration, the boys persisted in bringing their doubts before the group. The teacher accordingly equipped himself with the following questions designed to center their attention on the basic elements in the problem:

Has anyone ever seen an electron?

Can love be seen, heard, tasted, or smelled?

Does the fact that the reality of electrons and

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love cannot be proved by our senses make them any the less real?

Do we not know the existence of and do we not use the forces of radio, electricity, and gravity? From whence did they come and what forces keep them operating?

Is it reasonable that God created the universe in which law and order reign supreme and in which matter and energy are neither lost nor created, and that his highest attainment in human love and friendship should be lost forever?

Do we not recognize the truth which Jesus taught regarding our lives and works here on earth? Has there come from the lips of any other man such profound understanding of the nature and weakness of men? Then why should we doubt his expressed truth regarding the life to come, when he declared so explicitly, "If it were not so, I would have told you"?

The following Sunday the teacher brought a copy of *A Man in the Making*, by A. E. King, for the boys to read. He counseled them that many young men had passed through this same period of doubt. Time seems to adjust the difficulty when one strives to keep a sound mind and a healthy body. They were encouraged to live out of doors, get interested in athletics, and to devote themselves whole-heartedly to some work that interested them. His parting suggestion was a study of

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the lives of modern men of business and of science whose grasp of the realities of life would be far greater than theirs, in order to determine their outlook on the problems of religion. Such men as Eddington, Millikan, Pupin, Hoover, Coolidge, and Young were suggested. Later a copy of Eddington's volume, *Science and the Unseen World*, was purchased for the class and discussed in group meetings.

CHAPTER V

HOW SHALL WE TEACH THE BIBLE?

THE overwrought feelings of a good parishioner had gotten the better of him, as he accosted the pastor and superintendent with, "Have you men read this book which George's class is studying this term? It's an outrage to put such stuff before a growing boy. Just read some of the references for home study. Nice reading, isn't it? The lying, stealing, freebooting antics of some of those characters would sicken any man of trying to get religion from their lives. To-day we would put them behind bars in twenty-four hours."

Undoubtedly, indiscretion has characterized some content of teaching, especially in reference to the Old Testament. The mind of the alert boy or girl becomes puzzled. Through earlier grades the Book has been regarded as the Word of God. The love of God as revealed by Jesus has been painstakingly stressed. Then at the questioning

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age the youth wonders why God destroyed all of his children, excepting eight, by a mighty flood. He reads of the Hebrew leaders "hearing the voice of God" and then going out to commit plunder, rape, and freebootery and to run off with the beautiful women of the enemy. "How did those people get away with that stuff?" exclaims a fourteen-year-old boy.

The boys and girls study Greek and Roman history. The legendary tales of Hercules, Mercury, Atlas, and Ulysses interest them. They are taught, however, that the classic mythology is legendary. The stories are studied for what they are. But the tendency of youth is to approach the biblical accounts of the activities of men from a background of reverence and to accept them as of divine origin. This is the natural outcome of their training and experience. Their immature minds cannot bridge the gap. Frequently the teacher supplies just enough emotional sanctity to complete the picture. Herein resides one of the greatest weaknesses in present-day church-school practice. The teacher should not pause here to categorize the countless illustrations of the self-

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ish and murderous acts of the leaders and followers alike. The thoughtful student is already familiar with them. The vital question here is, How shall we teach the stories of the Bible and the account of the spiritual ascendancy of the race? For partial answer, recall previous suggestions as to the function of Christian education.

We suggested that knowing what is right and doing that right are quite different. To do right one must have a real desire; he must *want* to do right, feel right, and think right. We noted that Christian education may make a rich contribution to happy and useful living by creating such a want; placing what God wants above our trivial wants for the satisfaction of our native tendencies or acquired needs. Much of Jesus' teaching centers about this spiritual ascendancy over material wants.

The Bible is our supreme guide to spiritual living. It helps us satisfy our spiritual wants. Modern scholars point with conclusive evidence to the progress of the writing of the books in the Bible. Bit by bit the assemblage of the accounts can be traced. How little evidence there is of a dictation by

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God, or of anything like the sacred plates of gold handed down from heaven, dug up at Palmyra, New York, and then returned to heaven, is known to anyone who will study the facts in the case. Welling up out of the daily experiences of a race of people—their war songs, trials, joys, ideals, and faith—the narratives are vibrant with human interest and emotion. To read of the growth of their understanding of God and the spiritual forces is an inspiration. Here are recorded the finest thoughts about Almighty God, our duty to each other, the true meaning of human life, and the supreme place of spiritual values, that can be found in literature. Inspired! Of course it was. To the Christian who believes in the eternal fitness of things the Bible reveals God's plan to raise the soul of man to new heights. Through its influence his life shall be purified and made holy.

Let us examine the idea of "inspiration." The lads who looked at the Spirit of Saint Louis were inspired by the feats of its pilot. The beautiful thoughts in prose and poetry come only from inspiration. The writings of the Christian leaders in the last three hun-

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dred years surely go deeply into the life of the Master for their inspiration. Our trouble comes in trying to think of men being inspired ages ago, but not now. We certainly are in error when we read into the writings of the Hebrew sages, men like ourselves, meanings of modern life. When we attempt to make the "days" of creation in Genesis mean "ages" of time in a geologic evolution, our efforts only muddle the true message of the Bible. Those simple people were of the flesh, and accordingly fell victims to the desires of the flesh. As has been noted earlier, the native tendencies of the race have remained unchanged since recorded history has been written. They were inspired by the light of God as they saw it. Through the generations we have grown spiritually far beyond their meager beginnings. It would be a sorry tribute to our intelligence if we had not.

SOME SUGGESTIONS

The Bible is our great source of spiritual experience. There we find recorded the active experience of the Hebrews, of Jesus, and of the early founders of the Christian

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Church. In Christian living we must make their experience active within our lives. Here we find the chief use of the Bible in Christian teaching. Four suggestions may be helpful.

1. The Bible will assist us in solving our present-day problems. In class teaching many social, civic, and religious problems of life are introduced. We shall find the Bible a rich source book for guidance in solving such difficult questions as international peace, law enforcement, intemperance, the social evil, dishonesty in business, political graft, cheating in school, evil-mindedness, cursing, stealing, and even in small matters. When there is a felt need for knowledge in the spiritual realm, the Bible will be read with interest and lasting benefit.

2. The Bible provides the teacher with active source material in suggesting questions and topics for discussion. Just as Jesus proposed questions to stimulate the thinking of his hearers so the teacher will find in the Bible suggestions from the rich experiences of the characters. In this way the underlying principles of Christian living may be developed.

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3. The Bible provides a source of inspiration and comfort to the individual. It is inextricably interwoven with the life and customs of the church. Pupils should be instructed in its use in daily reading or in reading at such other times as inspiration may be needed. A member of the Christian Church should be conversant with the major characters, their achievements and their problems. A program of Christian education is not complete without a study of the Bible for its own spiritual values. It is felt, however, that such study should grow out of searching in the Bible for solutions to life problems. The practice of reading the Bible from cover to cover at a minimum number of sittings may lead to harmful results on the part of younger students.

4. The Bible provides a record of the social, civic, economic, and religious life of early peoples. The ways in which people met life problems twenty to forty centuries ago will be helpful in understanding our present-day questions, since our native tendencies have remained essentially unchanged during the years. The value of the experiences of these early forefathers will be

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greatly enriched if church-school pupils are taught the available facts regarding the origin and assemblage of the Bible, together with the habits, customs, and standards of that time.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

We have built many false ideas about the supposed conflict between science and religion. What shall be the position of the church-school teacher in the matter? Without entering into an elaborate discussion of this much-mooted problem, let us try to get at the core of the matter.

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," is one of those dynamic expressions of Jesus which has come ringing down the ages. Science is simply the truth, or accurate knowledge which we have of the universe and the nature of man. Surely, this knowledge *is* making us free. Disease is well-nigh under control in civilized lands. We have never been nearer the banishment of poverty than at present. Our lives are happier and more useful because of the knowledge which we have developed and used.

Science and religion deal in two different

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realms. The writers of the biblical account of the creation had no knowledge whatever of the science available to us. With Oriental imagery and in poetic form the Hebrew sage told what God had done. He did not tell *how* he did it. In science man has been seeking to discover how God works. Through scientific laws we are beginning to understand that God makes soil from rocks, giant trees from acorns, beautiful flowers from dried seeds, and magnificent personalities from struggling infants. That is the Creator's way. In it there is no conflict whatever with the biblical account of the creation. Compare the first verse in Genesis with a statement recently made by Doctor Eddington, one of our most eminent scientists. Said the Hebrew sage:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters (Gen. 1. 1, 2).

Said the scientist:

Looking back through the long past we picture the beginning of the world—a primeval chaos which time has fashioned into the universe that we

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know. Its vastness appalls the mind; space boundless though not infinite, according to the strange doctrine of science. The world was without form and almost void. But at the earliest stage we can contemplate the void is sparsely broken by tiny electric particles, the germs of the things that are to be; positive and negative they wander aimlessly in solitude, rarely coming near enough to seek or shun one another. They range everywhere so that all space is filled, and yet so empty that in comparison the most highly exhausted vacuum on earth is a jostling throng. In the beginning was vastness, solitude and the deepest night. Darkness was upon the face of the deep, for as yet there was no light.

The years rolled by, million after million. Slight aggregations occurring casually in one place and another drew to themselves more and more particles. They warred for sovereignty, won and lost their spoil, until the matter was collected round centers of condensation, leaving vast empty spaces from which it had ebbed away. Thus gravitation slowly parted the primeval chaos. These first divisions were not the stars but what we should call "island universes," each ultimately to be a system of some thousands of millions of stars. From our own island universe we can discern the other islands as spiral nebulae lying one beyond another as far as the telescope can fathom. The nearest of them is such that

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light takes nine hundred thousand years to cross the gulf between us. They acquired rotation (we do not yet understand how) which bulged them into flattened form and made them wreath themselves in spirals. Their forms, diverse yet with underlying regularity, make a fascinating spectacle for telescopic study.¹

The Bible is a guide to spiritual power and not a scientific explanation of the laws of the universe. It contains the richest and soundest basis known to man of the relation between spiritual values, a philosophy of life, and human conduct. Writes Michael Pupin, President of the American Society for the Advancement of Science:

To-day, when I hear Kreisler playing, or any other great musician, I feel that he is making the vibrating strings speak a language which is a true message from heaven. Light, I found, was a series of electronic impulses set throughout space by the sun and stars. And just as sound sets going the nerves of the ear to carry messages from the external world to the internal world of the human soul, so these electronic impulses set going the nerves of the eye which carry their messages to the brain. There, the soul deciphers and interprets their meaning. All these vibrations

¹ Arthur Stanley Eddington, *Science and the Unseen World*, The Macmillan Company, pp. 11-13.

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decipher their true meaning only when the soul deciphers their message.²

Instead of there being any conflict between science and religion, the fact is that religion owes science immeasurably for the knowledge that has been contributed. Science serves religion in at least three ways. First, our knowledge of the facts and laws of nature and of man enables us the better to understand God; second, the materials and means of science have enabled us the better to live the Christian life; and, third, science has taught us a new method of thinking in dealing with things and with each other.

Take the matter of nature's law and order and the facts which are now at our disposal in understanding the universe, the earth on which we live, and, most of all, man himself. Once men thought the earth was the central part of the universe, and that it was immovable. It was only three hundred years ago (1631) that the venerable Father Inchofer had definite opinion on this matter, "The opinion of the earth's motion is of all her-

² Pupin, Michael, Science Leads Us Closer to God, American Magazine, September, 1927.

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esies the most abominable, the most pernicious, the most scandalous; the immovability of the earth is thrice sacred; argument against the immortality of the soul, the existence of God, and the incarnation should be tolerated sooner than an argument to prove that the earth moves." In the good Father's mind science did conflict with religion. Through science our experience has been extended, so that no longer are we disturbed over such bits of knowledge.

Previous reference has been made to the magnitude of the heavens and of the infinitesimality of matter. The new science of electronics extends our knowledge still further. The nature of the elements (ninety-two in all) is now declared to be caused by a proton, which has a special structure and which is surrounded by a whorl of ions always of a fixed number and arrangement in a particular element such as carbon or iron. Add to this the unifying influence of Doctor Einstein's theory of the relativity of all things, the fact that space is not unlimited and that time moves in both directions, and the layman's mind is dizzy.

Law and order prevail everywhere. Stars

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move in predictable orbits. The characteristics of protons and ions remain fixed. Gravity, electricity, light, sound, and the like behave according to known laws. The monk, Mendel, brought to us a new knowledge of the transmission of traits and qualities from parents to offspring. Our enlightenment helps us to understand God's laws. If we can believe in God and if we can understand that matter and energy are not the final aim of the Creator of such infinite wisdom and power, we gain a new insight into the purposefulness of man's soul and God's plan for the exaltation of spiritual values. How can one with a normal mind stand before this vast and awe-inspiring spectacle without a feeling of deepest reverence and gratitude?

In the realm of better Christian living science comes again to the fore. A soul grows quite in proportion as it serves others. "He that findeth his life shall lose it," said Jesus. Preventive medicine, surgery, public sanitation, hospitals, and the professions of medicine and nursing have developed since the advent of science. Try to estimate the relief of human misery and suffering

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thus dependent indirectly upon science. Fossdick suggests that Jesus, who cared so much for the bodies of men, would rejoice in our achievements in relieving suffering. "He healed a few people after the manner of his day, but how grateful would he be to see science fulfilling his own words, 'Greater things than these shall you do.'"

Think of the extension of the Kingdom made possible by the radio. It is estimated that on a Sunday afternoon half the people of the United States listen in for gospel preaching and for worship. This message reaches into rural areas, into the homes of the invalid, into hospitals, prisons, and homes for the aged. Then, too, our Christian life is enriched by the erection of beautiful cathedrals, attractive homes, and by the reproduction, under modern processes, of works of art. Truly the results of scientific study and application guide and inspire our spiritual growth.

The third contribution of science is equally clear. We have learned to reason from cause to effect and from fact to conclusion. The man of science asks two major questions—What are the facts? and How shall

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I interpret them? Science has taught us that there is much yet to be known. Said Laplace at the time of his death: "What we know is nothing; what we do not know is immense." Edison expressed the same thought in these words: "As yet we do not know one seven-billionth part of one percent about anything."

In those parts of the world where science is still unknown or unused, senseless taboos and superstitions still abound. Even in our own land these taboos die hard. Witness the necessity of managers of skyscraper hotels having to omit the thirteenth floor and the number thirteen on rooms, to cater to the whims of guests. Science liberates our minds from the idea of goblins, searching for water with a crooked stick, and planting potatoes in the right phase of the moon.

In the study of the mind our thinking has been greatly improved. Most of our present knowledge of the mind has been developed since the turn of the century. Love, fear, hate, reverence, happiness, education, and kindred things have been studied with great exactness. We are learning to turn the light of science upon ourselves, our character, our

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purposes, and the powers locked up within us.

It should be clear, then, that science and religion complement each other. Each is stronger because of the other. Faith in the Unknown, faith in himself, and faith in his colleagues guide the searcher after new truth. So also the knowledge of science enables the Christian to live more Christlike.

THE MIRACLES

The scientist works with great accuracy. He reasons from facts and phenomena. Effects in material and bodily activity are explained by known causes. A given phenomenon may be reproduced by the application of natural laws. It is helpful to regard a miracle as a material or bodily effect, for which the cause is unknown. It is reasonable to conclude that such an effect does not thwart natural laws, as we know them, but that they are due to natural laws which we do not as yet understand. Lacking such knowledge many reserve judgment, pending a time when we shall have sufficient wisdom to explain them. When the true scientist does not have sufficient data, he suspends

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judgment on the cause of a demonstrated effect.

In modern times there are veritable miracles in material and bodily effects. Television, radio, electronics, and the new astronomy would seem like miracles to our grandfathers. The marvels of surgery, medicine, psychology, and psychic phenomena perplex the untrained mind. In science there are many effects for which satisfactory causes have not been found. When the miracles of Jesus are brought into class discussion, it seems desirable to treat them as being in the realm of demonstrations, for which there are as yet no scientific explanations. A Higher Power than man's seems to have intervened in the orderly process of nature. Jesus had power which we cannot as yet fathom. Most Christians believe that such power was gained through a spiritual fellowship with the Father.

Let us remember that Jesus placed minor emphasis on the miracles. The words, "Go and tell no man" were frequently on his lips. He seemed to discourage the desire for miraculous demonstrations. He constantly centered attention on the deeper elements of

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the moral and spiritual renewal of the inner life. Accordingly, it is suggested that in teaching the miracles of Jesus in the church school, pupil attention should be focused on the spiritual miracles which were wrought in Jesus' time, and which are still being wrought. We are not permitted to see the whole of life at any one time. What we see of its activities and mysteries is, at the most, but an indication of its entire scheme. As the great souls of any age or creed live by the help of a Higher Power beyond themselves, so in the realm of the recorded activities of Jesus it is helpful to regard such manifestations as evidence of Power which man will some day understand and be able to use to heal his body, dispel his worries, and enrich his spiritual life.

It seems best for us to live in a world where life is surrounded by mysteries. A universe in which all was apparent to the mind of man would weaken our hope and our faith in life. Religion helps us to live happily and usefully in a world of mystery, by giving us knowledge and light enough to guide our spiritual growth. Each new discovery in nature clears up some elements of

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mystery, but at the same time shows the world to be more wonderful and more mysterious than we had previously supposed.

USING LESSON HELPS

It is exceedingly hard for one person or for a group of persons to prepare lesson outlines and suggestions for another. Only with difficulty are methods of teaching and insight into individual pupils' problems transmitted through the printed page. Content of teaching, suggested outlines of topics, orderly arrangement of the experience of others, suggested problems, correlated questions, etc., may be organized to good advantage in booklet form. Much excellent material of this nature is available from the various denominational publishing houses. Their effective use is dependent upon the originality, resourcefulness, and interest of the teacher in pupils' problems. Many of the suggestions in the field of method may be helpful as guides to one's own teaching activity.

The interchange of literature among the denominations is strongly recommended. Specialists and committees of workers in one

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house may and often do excel other groups in their ability to prepare suitable material. The individual aptitudes of teachers may be recognized by having available different types of graded lessons. Still a third factor of advantage in having on file varied publications for a given department is the value of such content as supplemental reading for individuals or for teacher-training classes.

The present tendency in class teaching seems to be away from the use of the Bible itself. If pupil interest is centered in real problem solving and in searching for new light, we shall find profit in studying the Bible rather than lesson helps about it. With the younger pupils words and phrases will need to be explained in terms of their experience. Concentrating especially on the words of Jesus should constitute major emphasis in all church-school groups.

In addition to the study of the lives and characters of men, women, and children portrayed in the Bible, the "hero worship" tendency of pupils may be strengthened by the study of outstanding Christian characters of recent years, or now living. Such Jews as Oscar Straus and Dr. Simon Flexner reflect

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the best traditions of their Hebrew ancestors. The lives of Florence Nightingale, Abraham Lincoln, John Wesley, John Bunyan, Phillips Brooks, and others will contribute richly to our teaching content in the study of characters of high spiritual attainment. The sacrificing work, as portrayed in books and periodicals, of such leaders as Doctor Grenfell of Labrador, Doctor Schweitzer of Africa, Doctor Lazear, who gave his life to help exterminate yellow fever, and the countless persons who have entered the mission field to carry the Good News, is excellent source material. Recall that spiritual insight is caught by imitation, and that the knowledge (facts and information) of what constitutes right living will be most effective when pupils *want* that knowledge and when it is sought after to make more vital a spiritual impulse already felt. It is quite as much the function of the teacher to create a *want* for learning as it is to teach knowledge, skills, attitudes, and ideals.

SHORTER BIBLE NEEDED

One of the greatest contributions that the Protestant churches could make to the cause

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of Christian education would be the preparation of a shorter Bible suited to the interests and needs of children and youth. The personal contributions which have appeared already are valuable beginnings.³ One suspects that the Bible suffers from the failure of its devoted friends to present it in its best light. Wading through the lengthy descriptions of tribal warfare, family histories, ancient Jewish sacrifices and such repetitions as appear in Chronicles, Samuel, and Kings, dampens the ardor of the most resolute searcher after religious inspiration. There is much reflecting the crude and rough beginnings in religious life which should be relegated to the study of special students. It seems clear that a carefully selected series of books and chapters suited to the devotional life of youth and bearing the sanction of the Protestant churches would assist parents and teachers immeasurably in teaching spiritual truths and in developing right habits of Bible reading on the part of pupils. The writer's experience in editing scientific texts prompts the suggestion that our present Bible may

³ Kent, C. F., *The Shorter Bible*, and Sherman and Kent, *The Children's Bible*, Charles Scribner's Sons.

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constitute a basic reference volume which should accompany a shorter Bible in each Christian home. The briefer volume, like the elementary textbook, would become the book for systematic study, while the complete Bible, like the technical volumes in science, would be used chiefly for delving into special problems.

CHAPTER VI

ORGANIZING FOR WORK

EDUCATION is living. The school is a place for providing experiences that will enable children to learn to live happily and usefully. So the church school should be designed to help children to live the Christian way. To do this we should provide facilities for worship in groups according to interests and abilities, individual classrooms, so that each teacher may have a quiet, comfortable place for instructing, equipment and library facilities adequate to the needs of the pupil groups and the professional improvement of the staff, and, finally, suitable quarters for supervised recreation. These may be regarded as minimum standards. At present such standards are met in but a pitifully small proportion of the church schools. It is the premise of this chapter that an organization suited to instructional needs is directly dependent upon (1) construction of new church-school plants, (2) remodeling old church edifices in order to accommodate

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departmental church-school needs, or (3) consolidation or centralization of church-school facilities in many of our village and rural communities, so that the combined facilities may be available for one community school of Christian education.

CHURCH SCHOOL DEPARTMENTS

The progress made in the public schools in pupil grading, departmentalized activities, and instruction is a direct challenge to the church school. "But I miss the children so in our assembly period," complains a deacon. Of course he misses them, but they do not miss him. Younger children are hopelessly lost in an assembly of older groups and adults. The two chief reasons for departmental instruction are worship facilities and specialized activities which are suited to the educational needs and interests of the several groups.

A four-department school, exclusive of the Cradle Roll and Home Departments, would seem to be the minimum grouping for effective instruction; the primary (including the pre-school group), the juniors, the young people, and the adults. In the larger cen-

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ters or in centralized schools this minimum grouping may be expanded profitably to include the beginners (pre-school children), primary, junior, intermediate, young people, and adults. Whatever the departmental organization, it is imperative that some facilities be provided for separate worship periods. Meetings for part of the school before church and part of the school after church may be a possible means of accomplishing this end, if other devices fail.

Grading the children in the church school in accordance with their classification in the public school proves an effective means of keeping intelligence and interest groups together. The recent development of the junior high-school movement throughout the United States has some influence on church-school grading. These schools constitute grades 7, 8, and 9 and are organized to provide opportunities for pupil expression and activities. The exploratory or educational guidance features of the junior high school have alluring possibilities. If junior high-school pupils can be kept together in a department of the church school, a great gain in interest is quite certain to be realized.

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One is tempted to pause and discuss many interesting features of the work in each of the major departments, but because of the narrow limits of our study our suggestions must be confined to two important phases of organization. These are the work of the Junior Department, which culminates in the guidance of pupils into church membership, and the alluring possibilities offered in the Young People's Department for leadership training in Christian work.

TWO SPECIAL PROBLEMS

A desirable outcome of the teaching in the Junior Department should be the natural and voluntary desire to unite with the church. Psychologists tell us that pupils at this age (10 to 12 years) have developed their æsthetic emotions to a point where it is highly desirable for them to have some true form of expression. Religion provides this means through the love of God and the desire to serve him. Another factor also should be considered here. By the next year or two the children are getting well into adolescence, when radical and unexpected emotional upsets may come. The influence of church

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membership is a valuable asset to most young people.

Systematic instruction in church membership should be an integral part of the Junior Department program. Seemingly the most appropriate period for such teaching is during the Lenten season. The writer has co-operated with several pastors in organizing the instruction for this period. Five or six lessons seem about right. Usually ten or fifteen minutes is sufficient time during each worship period. The pastor should send a letter to the parents of the children in the upper grades and later call on them to explain the method and purpose of the program. Their wishes and co-operation should be respected and secured.

The teaching must, of course, be simple, direct, and well illustrated, and should bring out especially such points as the opportunity which the church offers for growth in the Christian life, regular attendance, the attitude of worship (the attitude that has been the ideal in that department), the privilege of church support by funds and service, something of the church symbols, the sacraments, and other points of special concern

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to an individual or to a denomination. Toward the close of the series of lessons it is helpful for the pastor to meet with the senior classes of the department in a room in which absolute quiet may be assured. His spiritual teaching at these meetings must be carefully planned and thoughtfully executed, as the attitudes developed by the pupils in later years will be largely dependent upon the effectiveness of the guidance at this time.

In the Young People's Department we have the training ground for Christian leadership. Just as we learn to swim by swimming, so we learn to lead by leading, or to be a disciple by following a chosen leader. Adults should keep in the background. Young people grow by solving their own problems. The rôle of adult supervision should be much like teaching an infant to walk. The mother stands close by to assist, but the child must do the walking.

The organization within the department is important. The organization here described has been tested and found to be effective. The young people elect their own officers from a slate approved by the advisory council of the department. This council is ap-

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pointed by the superintendent of the school and usually consists of one adult as chairman, one teacher in the department and the superintendent, *ex officio*. Each class within the department likewise should be organized with suitable officers. Then each class should name one delegate to a department council to work with the officers in planning programs and in determining activities. Classes should be encouraged to nominate their teachers. When the superintendent approaches a prospective teacher with the statement that a certain class has asked for him to teach their group, the appeal is doubly effective.

THE CENTRALIZED SCHOOL

In hundreds of church schools in rural and village areas departmentalization is well-nigh impossible because of limited enrollments and inadequate facilities. In these communities no single agency, in recent years, has so improved living as the centralization of public schools into units appropriate to the needs of the community. Bitter strife resulting in lifelong enmities, and disappointment on the part of the minor-

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ity that evil and iniquity did not ensue, are about the only factors remaining to mar the achievement. Why is it not possible in many rural areas to centralize the church schools into one community school of Christian education? The wisdom and benefits of such a project already have been demonstrated.

Three benefits are apparent. The facilities of all of the churches are made available for departmentalized teaching; the enrollment of pupils is large enough to permit grading; and the teaching personnel of the entire community is made available for the central school. Most rural and village churches were built at a time when one large auditorium was thought sufficient for the Sunday school. If three churches combine, three auditoriums with the church auditoriums are available for departmental work. For example, the adults and the beginners or primary pupils could meet in one church, the juniors could meet in a second edifice, while the young people could meet in the third building.

As a rule, gifted and willing workers in the church school cannot be found in sufficient numbers. In a central school the teach-

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ing talent of the entire community is made available. Teacher-training classes may be organized for department groups and for the entire personnel. The time is not far distant when the demand for trained leadership through directors of Christian education will be as much in evidence in village areas as in urban centers. The only possible hope of providing such leadership is a centralized program.

"O Lord, forgive us, for we are very determined," a good brother was heard to pray. If our determination is in the right direction we do not need forgiveness. If, however, we still determine to sacrifice a child-centered church school for the dry bones of traditional doctrines and a "pet route" to the Kingdom there is need to ask for forgiveness. There are problems to be met in perfecting such an organization, but while the churches are striving for a community organization the school officers have a golden opportunity to bring a new day for Christian teaching and the church of to-morrow.

A few cautions may be valuable. First of all, any program of centralization for church-school work must be authorized and

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approved by the several governing bodies of the church groups. In most instances the program will emanate from the local community. A careful assembly of the facts and the details of a plan of operation should then be presented for approval. A "Community Board of Christian Education" or some other appropriate body, named jointly by the several church bodies, could be given administrative control over the project. Mission funds, if desired, could be kept separately according to denominations. To insure emphasis on church membership the pupils could be returned to their respective churches during the Lenten season for special instruction. From the question asked by a pupil—"What do the denominations believe that is so different, anyway?" it would appear that any denominational priority or superiority in method of achieving "the abundant life" remains yet to be demonstrated.

MAKING THE BEST OF OUR FACILITIES

In private life, if necessity demands, we remodel or repair what we have to meet new purposes. The same principle should apply

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in the church school, in at least three ways. First, remodel the rooms with partitions, and otherwise, to provide department meeting places and the maximum number of classrooms. Second, beautify the surroundings. If children *must* be relegated to the cellar for their worship, fit the barren quarters so that some semblance of home and comfort may prevail. Pictures, curtains, furniture, rugs, will greatly aid in developing right attitudes in worship. Then listen to that piano! A sensitive child's nerves would be put on edge by its raucous vibrations. Worship for most normal people is thwarted by such a handicap. Third, secure equipment adequate to the needs of the age groups. Tables, chairs, bookcases, maps, magazines, illustrative material, blackboards, library books, song books suited to department needs, are as indispensable in church-school teaching as in public-school education.

WHO SHALL TEACH?

Two essential elements are to be considered in selecting the staff—interest and ability. Interest relates to the desire to have a part in the advance of the Kingdom

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through the guidance of youth. It consists chiefly in an inner urge to do more than coast downstream with the tide of Christian progress. To pull one's own weight and the weight of those less able to row against the influences which beset us, requires a motive for service. Without an active burning interest in guiding youth the church-school teacher must first overcome so much friction in his own nature that there is little energy left for true guidance.

Interest seems to go hand in hand with spiritual understanding. Having caught the spirit of Jesus' way of life, interest in imparting that light to others seems almost spontaneous. The early Christians, meeting in caves and kitchens, were zealous to extend their newly experienced way of life. The interest of missionaries in their field seems so integrated with their personalities as to be their main driving force. Those activities into which we put our wholesouled interest yield our most productive effort.

Ability to succeed in church-school work is somewhat different. It consists mainly in three factors—knowledge of the science of education, skill in stimulating and guiding

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youth, and continued study and growth in the art of teaching. While some have a native aptitude in teaching, the ability to teach is largely acquired through study and practice. There seem to be few people of normal intelligence who cannot acquire the ability to teach in some department of the church school. Here, again, it is chiefly a matter of desire. The special teacher-training conferences and classes, excellent magazines and books, and the special lesson helps prepared in connection with graded lessons are available means to teachers who desire to improve in their ability to teach.

The movement toward the employment of church directors of religious education, area supervisors, and conference directors is most encouraging. In the long run this professional effort in the improvement of organization and teaching will net substantial results. Aside from improved building facilities, the professional improvement of teachers in the public schools has been the largest single factor in the remarkable progress made in the field of public education.

“Harvard College pays me for doing what, if I were able, I would gladly pay it

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for allowing me to do," wrote Professor Palmer. This gifted teacher had caught the true worth of his profession. Such an opportunity is available to lay people in teaching in the church school where one is not paid in money for service. If Professor Palmer's expression of willingness to pay for the privilege of teaching could become meaningful to present and prospective teachers, much of our difficulty in securing "willing" workers would disappear. In my boyhood the older boys literally beat into my mind the idea that a "sponger" was not worthy of friendship. Like many boyhood acquisitions, the idea still prevails. Let the prospective teacher weigh carefully the heritage of Christian teaching. Our government is built upon Christian principles. Colleges have their roots deeply fastened in Christian advancement. Great social reforms, charity for the needy, hospitals for the sick, and continued emphasis on the beautiful in life through sculpture, painting, literature, art, and the drama, suggest the rôle of Christian teaching. Is not the boyhood idea of sponging in evidence when talented persons with available time and energy partake

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of Christian benefits and yet persist in shifting the responsibility of perpetuating them through education?

The lines of Clarence Flynn express something of the deeper satisfactions which come to teachers:

"The eyes of the ages are toward him.

The love of the race is his own.

The heart of the world will reward him,

With a name that is more than a throne.

The life that he lives is unending,

For he is the servant of youth.

Earth is lit by the flame he is tending—

This priest at the altar of truth."

SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Projects in missions, charity, schools, libraries, hospitals, and homes for children and the aged have characterized the program of the Protestant churches since their early beginning. Jesus' pointed words, "Go ye into all the world," have brought forth worthy effort in extending the Kingdom. Church extension is indeed an integral and basic element in Christian progress. Accordingly, the essentials of such a program should find an adequate place in the church school. Without them true Christian teach-

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ing is weakened. It is desirable to group extension projects under the head of service activities. Three types seem essential—pupil service in extending the welfare of the department of which they are members, worthy mission, charity or benevolent service in the community in which pupils live, and a mission project in the home or foreign field.

In each type of service the key to effective teaching is specific activity in which the pupils have some interest. Each enterprise should meet the standards of a project as outlined on page 101. Study without action in regard to the great need of this field or that or of the church project in missions is not only ineffective, but in many instances is actually harmful. Of far greater significance is the selection and study of a specific service enterprise such as visiting and serving a family in which there are children who need friendship or financial aid, or dealing directly with a group of similar aged pupils in another field, such as the Negroes, mountain whites, Indians, or immigrants. Problems of interest in extending the kingdom of God, systematic self-sacrifice in giving, and sustained effort in passing on the torch be-

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come real and vital when actual projects are undertaken by pupil groups. Needless to say, careful guidance on the part of teachers is necessary in selecting projects and in supervising the contacts of pupils with others less fortunate than they.

"But such a plan upsets our program for financing missions," objects an official. To which one may reply, "Which should take precedence, a system of bookkeeping or the training of the church members of tomorrow?" At present there is little evidence pointing to overburdened mission treasuries, or to a great influx of interest in contributing toward mission projects. First-hand experience with the project plan of service activities together with an extensive observation of the plan convince the writer that effort centered in this direction will net magnificent results in enriched Christian living for those who study and give as well as for those who receive.

THE CHANGING FAMILY

Our family life is changing. Overcrowded programs for the children, the press of business responsibilities for father, and a new

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social and civic freedom for mother have combined to make of many homes simply a convenient place to stay between engagements. The family altar interests fewer people. Grace at meals is neglected. Religion in the modern family seems to have decreased emphasis from the standpoint of family worship, Scripture reading, prayer, and study.

Irreligious or nonreligious parents of church-school pupils present a family situation which makes Christian teaching exceedingly difficult. In this and previous chapters our attention has been directed toward the importance of *living* Christian ways. It is undoubtedly true that many children do not live Christian ways in spite of faithful fathers and praying mothers. After taking account of exceptional cases, it seems clear, however, that Christianity practiced in the family circle is perhaps the most potent influence brought to bear upon children in learning Christian qualities. If parents wish to have their children religious, they must take a genuine interest in religion themselves. Rarely do we find young people more religious than their parents.

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Many church schools recruit pupils from non-churchgoing families. The mere fact that such parents send their children to church schools indicates that they are interested to have them receive religious instruction. Because of the key position which the home occupies in providing an environment in which children may see Christianity practiced in daily living, pastors and church-school officers should seek to capture the home influence to complement the activities of the school. Parents should be made aware of the paramount place which the family occupies in guiding the activities of pupils. Letters explaining church-school objectives and plans, home visits by teachers and officers, and pastoral calls provide useful means of keeping this basic factor before parents. The family life often may undo all that teachers seek to accomplish in stimulating and guiding the activities of children.

Pastors may assist in this vital problem. The tendency of fathers to feel that the home is the place to unburden their pent-up grudges, because it would hurt their business or their profession to unburden them elsewhere, and the tendency of mothers to

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let the unbridled expression of their feelings serve as an example of inner control, make good material for sermons. Already, many churches have entered upon a campaign to rededicate the American home to make it fit for the children. Fiske reports¹ the results of a five months' study of the suburban family by a group of earnest church workers who realized the significance of the influence of the modern home on the life of the child. The program adopted by this group to "rebuild the temple of home religion" is a challenge and an inspiration to pastors, officers, and teachers.

¹ Fiske, G. W., *The Changing Family*, Harpers, p. 311.

CHAPTER VII

OUR FREEDOM, OUR POWER, AND THE FUTURE

LISTEN in on a group of young people discussing the problems of Christianity in reference to the work of their department in the church school. They are saying in substance:

"We'd like to do something worth while in the field of religion. All the big problems aren't solved yet. Jesus ought to mean more to the world than he does. People aren't awake to the possibilities of Christianity. Why can't we have a chance to tackle something big? Then look at the squabbling among the denominations. What do they believe that's so different, anyway? If they'd get together on some of the really big problems of the day, why couldn't they solve them? We liked the way Premier MacDonald and President Hoover talked over plans for world peace, but we couldn't help noticing that during that same year the civilized nations of the world spent more for the trappings of war than in any previous year. That looks like peace, doesn't it?

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Why don't the churches get behind a little of the peace that Jesus talked about? It would be really a big affair if we could live as nations, as though Christ were here on earth.

"This discussion of creeds and doctrines interests us very much. Weren't they written with minds just like ours? Did those men back there several hundred years and more have a corner on all the intelligence in religion? Don't we have leaders in the Christian Church whose opinion is worth something? The trial on evolution and religion in Tennessee made a pretty spectacle in a time of good brains, such as we have to-day. How long will it be before people will see that scientific knowledge helps Christianity?"

Desire for Christian activity vibrates in every sentence. Impatience to get at big things is evident. What a tremendous influence would be in motion if that *urge* could be harnessed and self-directed so that the enthusiasm of fourteen could be linked, somehow, with the experience and judgment of forty! Human motive is the dynamic force which moves men.

Recall the law of readiness. To act when one is ready to act brings satisfaction; not to act brings annoyance. Were these young people ready to act? As the psychologist

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would say, they are "set" to go. Repression of their desire and enthusiasm will bring annoyance, just as expression of it will bring satisfaction. In this already created desire for the Christian life evident in thousands of our youth we have "a pearl of great price." The guidance of this urge through activities in the church school and in the church will net rewards, the fruits of which have been, as yet, scarcely tasted. Be assured that if this desire subsides into inaction at this time it will be exceedingly difficult to recapture in later years.

THE NEW FREEDOM

Sometimes such an urge is lacking. In its stead there is a quest for freedom from old restraints. This brings us face to face with one of the most troublesome and most widely discussed problems of our time—the freedom of youth.

A small group of boys decided to throw off restraint. "Let's be free of this highbrow authority," they said. "We'll do what we please." And they did. Tired of having their energy and desires restrained, they set out on a wild orgy, gratifying many of their

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native and original wants. They cut loose from the constituted authority, which in their case was parental guidance and certain laws, not too well enforced. Before long their quest for freedom was cut off. Later, with diseases that racked the body, with reputations to be regained and characters to be rebuilt with difficulty, they realized that they had paid an exceedingly high price for learning what freedom is not.

There is nothing especially modern about this new freedom. Paul had it to deal with. "What the law cannot do," he wrote to the Romans, by way of citing the limits of external restraint. We in the United States are finding "what the law cannot do," in these enlightened years.

The heart of the problem is here. Our youth have had more schooling than ever before. Modern devices have widened their experience immeasurably. Home restraints for some unaccountable reason have been let down. They have money, given to them by indulging parents or earned during a period of high wages. Plenty of leisure and many means to make it easier to indulge the native desires of the body, coupled with laws

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laxly enforced, complete the picture. Then we wonder why it is that authority is flouted. Someone has aptly suggested that the authority is still in the home, only it has been transferred: now the children have it.

Restraining laws are of two kinds—external and internal. The law of the land illustrates the external type of control. It is the lowest type of authority. If one does not have sufficient intelligence or self-control, then the state provides the restraint for his conduct. A young man stood before the bar of justice charged with a capital offense. The judge was moved by the youth of the culprit. Hesitating to pass sentence too hastily, he thumbed the leaves of a legal volume and glanced at paragraphs here and there. The young man recognized the book. Addressing the judge he said: "Your honor, my father wrote that book. He too was a judge and spent long years in preparing his legal books. Meanwhile, I grew up without his counsel. He was too busy to talk with me. He must complete his books. Now, here I stand, sentenced out of the very book which my father wrote."

The father had failed in the biggest busi-

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ness in life, and the young man had failed to learn the second kind of authority. The laws of internal mastery had escaped him. As has been said, a chief aim of Christian education is to help us to live so that we shall *want* right things, and so that we shall *want* to do God's will. This is the key to an inner control. When we feel the upthrust of the spiritual power which comes from God, we acquire an internal achievement, and it is that achievement alone which directs the good life.

It is not strange that in an enlightened age of intelligence youth has sought freedom from traditional authority and senseless taboos. Thinking for oneself is the main-spring of a scientific age. The real danger in going *from* the authority which they find is that they may not go *to* some other authority. Control of some kind is imperative, else we turn back the pages of civilization. The ascendancy of spiritual and moral values to the inner throne clearly is the authority *to* which all should go for guidance. Christian teaching brightens the control lights to guide us, much as the beacon lights guide the air pilot through the darkest night.

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OUR POWER AND OUR RESPONSIBILITY

The United States occupies about one seventh of the land area of the globe and has about one sixth of the population, yet we produce more than fifty per cent of the raw materials and have acquired approximately one third of the wealth of the world. President Scott of Northwestern University has calculated that, after estimating the mechanical power in waterfalls, engines, dynamos, and the like, each person has available the mechanical energy equal to the work of one hundred and thirty-eight human slaves. No people have developed such powers over matter and energy. Our lives have been made happier and more useful because of our control over the forces of nature. The drudgery of relentless human toil seems to be behind us, as we have harnessed other forces to do our bidding. Already many new powers are within our grasp.

But this power is like a two-edged sword; it cuts both ways. The use of mechanical energy for human muscle brings leisure, for weal or for woe. Changing the world has not changed us. We still have those native

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cravings of mastery of others, hunger, thirst, sex, pugnacity, etc. The new leisure brings opportunities to gratify these underlying wants hitherto unknown. The devices which we have invented to stimulate these cravings are unique and iniquitous. The night club and cabaret, the one-piece bathing suit, *risqué* movies, lewd stories, "art" magazines with nude female figures, speakeasies, high-powered cars, the disappearance of the chaperon, knowledge of contra-conceptives and birth control are but the beginning of a long list of our contributions. The gangster is aided by our new power. The automatic, the machine gun, the gas bomb, and fast boats are substantial aids to his ingenuity. In this day and time the original cravings of our natures surely do not suffer for lack of nourishment.

Did you ever sit in a secluded woody spot just apart from a main highway? Modernity clamors by. The place is filled with discordant noise, harassed by the mechanical unrest. Hustle, speed, pass the next fellow, the concrete ribbon whirring beneath the wheels, the signboard beridden landscape whizzing past! These are the common thing.

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From the vantage point one does not wonder that nerves break under the strain. We are under the spell of our newly found mechanical toys.

There are those who have played with the machine and have come back to their garden. Perfumes of flowers and the wind swaying the trees are delightful substitutes for the smell of burned oil and the din of traffic. The soul finds refreshment in the quiet hour of meditation. Our power over material things seems to stifle both the urge and the ability to go apart and dream. Perhaps a day will come when we shall be able to mingle the artistic and the mechanical. Then we shall succeed in possessing power over the earth and in gaining our own soul.

History is replete with the records of the rise and fall of peoples. Some had too much leisure, misused it, and waned because of poverty; still others pinned their faith on false ideals. For us the golden hour seems to have struck. Wealth, control of mechanical energy, and leisure are available to us. It is like a rushing torrent sweeping down the valley. If that power is controlled by dams at the headwaters, harnessed into raceways,

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and plunged into turbines, comfort and happiness are conveyed to us. When our mastery over the forces of nature is directed by a new and vital understanding of our spiritual resources, we shall feel that the Supreme Architect understands and is happy.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

What of the future? Will these stupendous changes induced by the new science continue to multiply? Shall we continue to think, to act, and to feel differently because of the changing world? An affirmative answer seems quite certain. We are yet in the twilight of our knowledge of nature and of man himself. It seems that a day will come when we shall look back upon our present knowledge as but the mere rudiments of a scientific dawn. The crucial test of our progress will be our ability to keep our moral and spiritual advances abreast of material advances. If our youth shall fail to grapple effectively with present and potential material powers, the very foundations of civilization will totter.

It is reported on good authority that the management of the General Electric Com-

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pany was authorized to "spend unlimited funds and effort" to secure another Charles P. Steinmetz. Fantastic stories were circulated about his enormous salary and holdings in the company, yet when he died, his estate consisted of a life insurance policy of less than \$2,000, an outworn car, and a few personal belongings. He never had a salary—only an account to cover his expenses. He had declared that he did his work for its own sake. The world owes the wizard hunchback of Schenectady an unpayable debt for his stock of new truth. It is inspiring to note his idea of what the future holds for us in the realm of new truth. Just before his death he declared "that the most important advances in human knowledge in the next forty years would be in the realm of the spiritual."¹

Note also the comments of Millikan, nationally known physicist, in regard to the vanishing division lines between the various branches of physics. At one time the subject was divided into the sharply separated divisions of mechanics, molecular physics, heat, sound, light, and electricity. Heat was

¹ Reported in American Magazine, June, 1930, p. 51.

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later shown to be molecular energy and not a substance. Next it was demonstrated that light and radiant heat were induced by ether waves and that they were the same thing except for different wave lengths. Soon electricity was taken out of its separate division and proven to be similar to light and radiant heat, differing only in the wave lengths of ether. There still remained three divisions—ether physics, matter physics, and current electricity. The latter two were then thrown together when the physicist revealed the fact that current electricity is merely the motion of electrons, of which matter is composed. Then came Einstein's startling assertions that ether and matter are indistinguishable, and that space is the sole theory of reality. His present theory seems to indicate that space swallows up time, matter, and energy. President Frank of Wisconsin University suggests that as the scientist walks about in the one room of space, he "shakes his head, peers into the future and asks whether it is at all likely, in the light of this history of falling walls, that we can long maintain the old distinction between matter

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and mind? Materialism grows less material."²

"Experiment!" declared Francis Bacon, as he set in motion our searching and re-searching for new truth. Millions in public and private funds are poured out to push back the veil of ignorance. It now seems that we are on a new frontier. In the material fields there is infinitely more ahead than has been developed in the past. In the field of the great unseen forces which build personality and place the soul in tune with the Infinite we are as yet in swaddling clothes. May we not anticipate that the same scientific method and accurate searching for truth as used in material things can and will be focused on the problem of changing men? Already some worthy efforts have been spent in this direction. The forces of electricity, radio, light, and electrons have been on the earth since the beginning, yet we have unlocked their holdings of truth only in the last half century. Perhaps in the realm of spiritual resources there are mighty and infinite values yet to be unlocked.

Can a soul reason? Does a soul need to

² Syndicated editorial.

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remember? What relationship does intelligence bear to spiritual insight? In the kingdom of God does knowledge of material things matter? What are the main springs of a dynamic personality in relation to being a child of God? These and countless other questions still puzzle us.

Likewise we need experimentation in Christian education. How shall Christian experience be graded to suit the interest and abilities of children? What effective means are open to us in guiding youth in gaining spiritual insight? What kind of experience will yield best results in teaching worship, prayer, meditation, reverence, and inspiration? How may the Christian life be integrated with the complex changes of modern living? Such queries are but an indication of our present dilemma. No real progress in Christian education will be made until the penetrating light of research has been focused on its problems. Our present tendency toward modernism may prove to be as much of an evasion of the problems as an attempted way out. In our church schools we have produced little or nothing as yet in the way of results substantiated by research

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and experiment. Some light is being shed on the problem, however, by such studies as those made by Mumford and MacLean.³

THE VALUE OF EDUCATION

One final suggestion. This little book is an endeavor to sketch a simple philosophy of Christian teaching suited to the rapidly changing world in which we live. The main threads of thought are even now at work in our midst. Such words as texts, lesson units, discipline, subject matter, courses for juniors, doctrines, creeds and denominations, already are giving way to the new idea of wholesome living, and attending the church school because it enriches life. To break the strangle hold of tradition and to build anew educational thought suited to our needs is a task of great magnitude. In these pages an attempt has been made, in nontechnical language, to aid lay people to understand the changes going on before our very eyes. Seeing the changes, some have wondered, some have feared, others have rejoiced at the new

³ Mumford, E., *The Dawn of Religion in the Mind of the Child*, Longmans, Green & Co.; MacLean, A. H., *The Idea of God in Protestant Religious Education*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University.

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opportunities, and still others have pointed the finger of scorn at our simple efforts. The new church school has a marvelous outlook, if it shall keep pace with the science of education. It will cost much more in funds and human effort than are being expended at present. Chiefly, it needs human talent—intelligence, interest, and Christian character. Men and women of such caliber who have grasped the new point of view of Christian education will speed the kingdom of God.

We must aid and trust our youth to make their own decisions. New demands quite unknown to us will be made upon them. Like the poor, always we seem to have with us the jazzing, gold-grabbing, flask-toting, sex-monging, thrill-seeking and home-wrecking children of men; but, as always, they are in the minority. The rank and file of our youth are interested in high ideals and in knowing how to live by them. We need teachers and education rather than censors and legislation. Through education we shall know the emptiness, the cheapness, and the vulgarity of living on the lower levels. One suspects that man will achieve immortality

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because, while living in an environment of flesh and material things, he has learned to recognize and to nurture his spiritual resources so that they shall become a part of his very being.

Reason does not permit us to believe that the destiny of those who have here incarnated such spiritual values can end with the grave. Through the ages it seems increasingly clear that there is a Realm in which man's spirit, when nurtured by Christian teaching and Christian living, will find the company of those who have sought to know and to pursue justice, goodness, and beauty, to love their fellow men and to do the will of God. An education in Christian living seems to be our surest and most orderly means for gaining wisdom concerning that Realm, realizing our desire for immortality, and accepting Robert Browning's challenge to "greet the unseen with a cheer."

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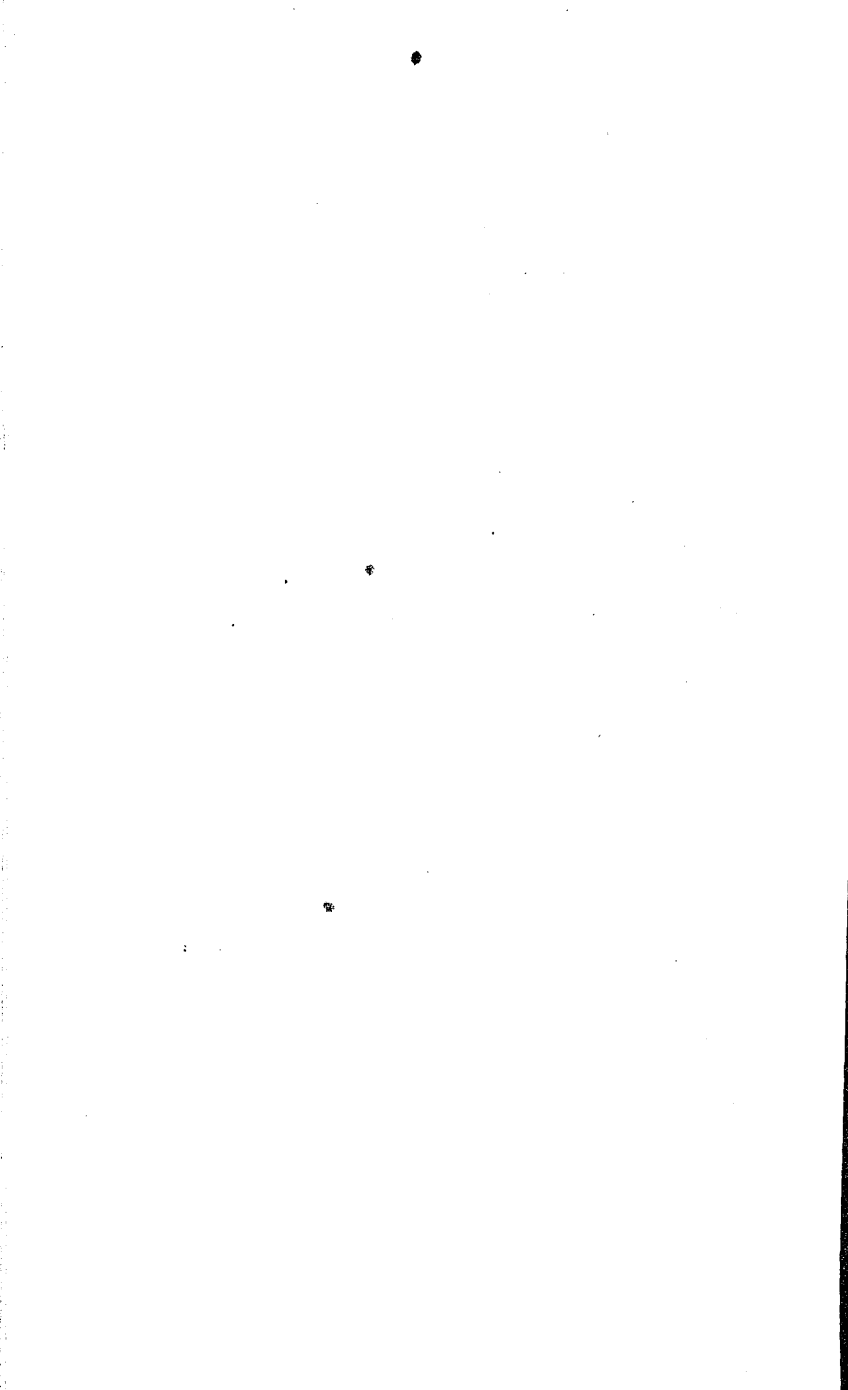
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